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THE  
Publications of the Prince Society.

Established May 25th, 1858.

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VOYAGES  
OF THE  
NORTHMEN TO AMERICA.

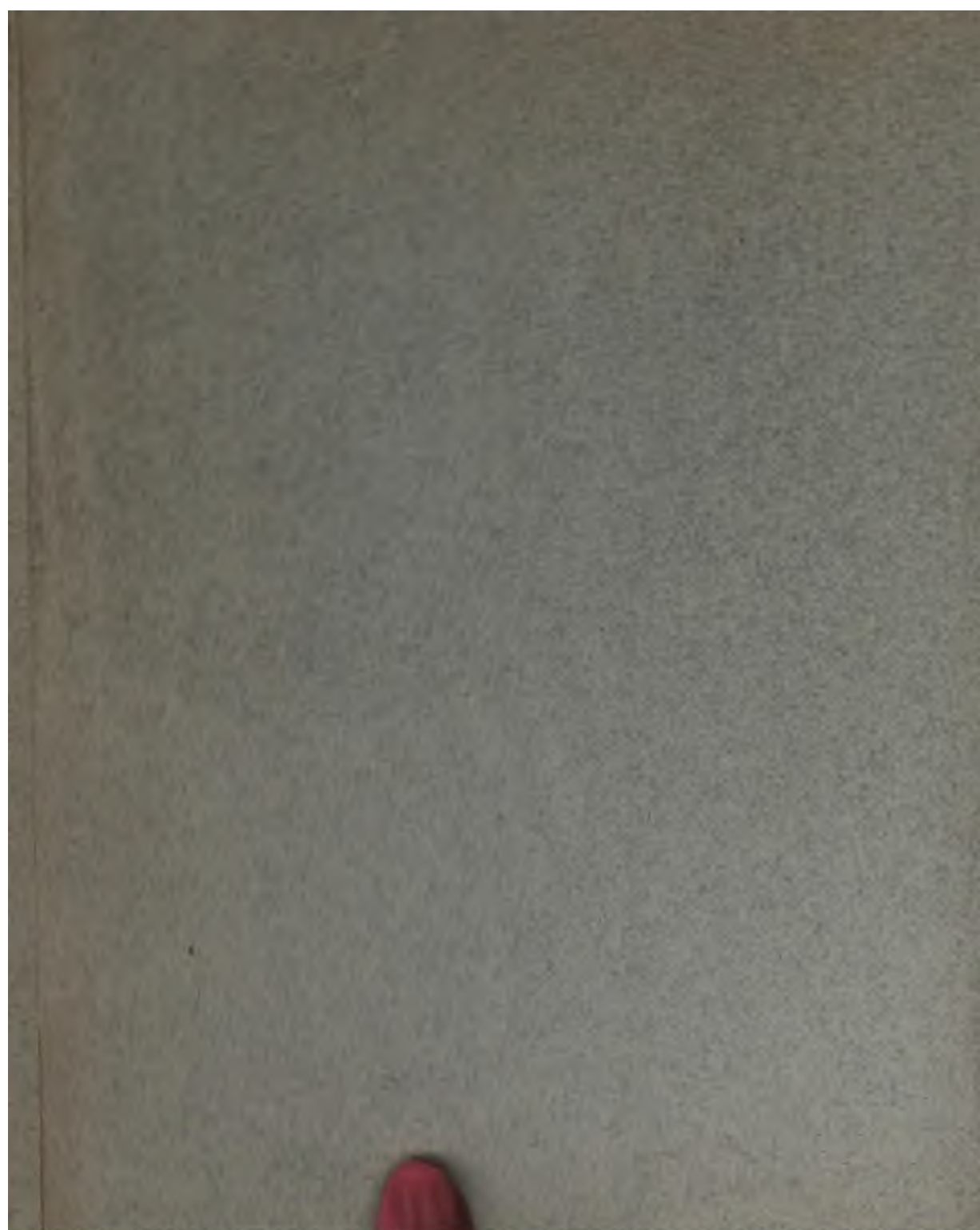
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# VOYAGES

OF THE

## NORTHMEN TO AMERICA.

INCLUDING EXTRACTS FROM

ICELANDIC SAGAS RELATING TO WESTERN VOYAGES BY NORTH-  
MEN IN THE TENTH AND ELEVENTH CENTURIES IN AN  
ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY NORTH LUDLOW BEAMISH;  
WITH A SYNOPSIS OF THE HISTORICAL EVIDENCE  
AND THE OPINION OF PROFESSOR RAFN AS  
TO THE PLACES VISITED BY THE  
SCANDINAVIANS ON THE  
COAST OF AMERICA.

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EDITED WITH AN

### INTRODUCTION

BY THE REV. EDMUND F. SLAFTER, A.M.

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## P R E F A C E.

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THE historical interest which attaches to the voyages of the Northmen to America in the tenth and eleventh centuries has led the Council of the Prince Society to believe that the character of these voyages, as set forth and delineated in the original Icelandic sagas, or ancient Scandinavian manuscripts, should be rendered accessible to the members of the Society in an English translation. The excellent version of Mr. Beamish, long since out of print, has been used for this purpose. To this has been added Professor Rafn's synopsis of the historical evidence contained in the sagas, and his attempt to identify the places on our coast visited by the Northmen.

The introduction contains an account of the first publication of the sagas by the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, and the views of the editor as to the credibility of these manuscripts as historical documents.

As the text of this volume contains all that may be considered as trustworthy evidence relating to the visits of the Northmen to this country, it is confidently hoped that it will prove to be not the least valuable of the Society's publications.





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## INTRODUCTION.

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ABOUT forty years ago, the attention of historical scholars on both sides of the Atlantic was directed to the voyages alleged to have been made by the Icelanders, or Scandinavians, to the continent of America, in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Anterior to this, these voyages had been known and studied by a few historical writers, and alluded to by others; but, nevertheless, up to that time their character and history were, to the general reader, involved in mystery. The Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, at Copenhagen, entered upon the investigation of the subject with enthusiasm, energy, and comprehensive views. Their scheme involved a much wider field than the visits of the Northmen to America. It comprehended a thorough investigation of the whole subject of Scandinavian history and literature. The Society proposed to publish from time to time such old Northern manuscripts as might be useful in the elucidation of history, antiquities, and language. The field was divided into sections; and active workers



workers were appointed to each, selected with reference to their special tastes and learning. The fruits of these labors were prolific; and in the progress of a few years more than forty volumes were issued, besides gazettes and annual reports, dealing with early Scandinavian life, manners, and customs, in their multiform conditions and phases.

In 1837, Professor Charles Christian Rafn, who had been placed at the head of the section on the voyages to America, published, under the auspices of the Society, an elaborate report, in a volume entitled "*Antiquitates Americanæ*," an imperial quarto of 526 pages, richly embellished with numerous illustrations and maps, comprising fac-similes of the most important parchment codices, which had been taken as the basis of the work. In this volume, the treatment of the whole subject is thorough and scholarly. While it is never safe to assume that the treatment of any historical question is absolutely complete and exhaustive, we apprehend that little or nothing more will ever be added to our knowledge of the voyages made to this country by the Northmen in the tenth century.

The evidence relied upon by Professor Rafn is derived from two sources; viz., from ancient writings, known as Icelandic sagas, and from historical monuments and remains illustrating and confirming the narratives contained in the sagas.

The historical monuments were of course to be sought in America. A correspondence was accordingly opened with the Historical Society of Rhode Island; and a very careful search was made for such remains as might in any way point to the Scandinavian voyages in question. The attention

tion was naturally directed to several objects of interest, which had long been familiar to antiquaries, and whose origin was at that time involved in doubt. Prominent among these were the celebrated stone structure of arched mason-work in Newport, and the notorious but unintelligible writing upon the Dighton rock. Careful and elaborate descriptions and drawings of these were forwarded to the Committee at Copenhagen. The credulity of the Danish *savans* led them to express the opinion that both of these were the work of the Scandinavian voyagers. Whatever confidence may at first have been felt or expressed in this opinion, the forty years that have since elapsed have left no trace of such a belief, so far as we are aware, in the minds of distinguished antiquaries and historians of the present day. The ground has been carefully surveyed, and the conclusion has been reached that no remains are to be found on the coasts of America, that can be traced to the visits of the Northmen in the tenth century. The whole of the evidence, therefore, of these alleged voyages and discoveries, is documentary, and is to be sought alone in the Icelandic sagas. All that is possible for us to know on the subject is contained in these ancient writings. The range of investigation is thus brought within a very narrow compass. The documents, consisting of extracts from ancient sagas, are not numerous or extensive. They are accessible, through the report of Professor Rafn, in three different languages; viz., in the *dönsk túnga*, or old Icelandic in which they were originally written, and in a Danish and a Latin version. The English translation contained in this volume, comprising all that is important to a  
full

full knowledge of the subject, places the contents of those ancient manuscripts within the reach of all students of American history.

The synopsis of the evidence, and the opinion of Professor Rafn, as to the identity of the places visited on our coast by the Northmen, constitute a valuable commentary on the text. His opinion is valuable because it is the result of careful and scholarly investigation, and should, doubtless, have weight with the reader. But, nevertheless, it is only an opinion, and is subject to the usual chances of error. It must be regarded, therefore, as open to revision on all points on which the reader may be better informed. This liberty should be freely exercised on all opinions which have been, or may be, expressed on this subject. They have widely differed in the past, and it is not likely that they will altogether coincide in the future. The student of these ancient writings will be able to form the best judgment as to the places visited by the Northmen, by a careful study of the documents themselves, regarding the opinions of others only as subsidiary, and not permitting them to have any controlling influence upon his own mind,—certainly not until he has thoroughly compassed and weighed the force of the reasons on which they rest. No learning can justify us in dogmatizing on the subject, or in criticizing with asperity the deliberately formed opinions of others. For the best opinion that may be formed, with all possible facilities, cannot rise to the dignity of a historical demonstration, or be held without some deep shadings of doubt.

But an important question must be settled prior to that of the identity of the places visited. This leads us to a  
brief

brief consideration of the credibility of the Icelandic sagas. From these ancient writings, as we have already intimated, we derive all our knowledge relating in any way to these voyages. It is from them that we first learn that the alleged voyages were undertaken to the American coast. Our belief in the narratives contained in these documents must therefore depend upon what we know of the origin of the documents in question, the manner in which they have been preserved and handed down to us through a period of nearly nine hundred years. That we may comprehend this more fully, a few preliminary statements will be necessary.

Towards the end of the ninth century, Iceland was discovered and colonized by voyagers from Norway. A century later, the colonists of Iceland continued their explorations to Greenland, where Christianity was subsequently introduced, churches were planted, and continued to exist and flourish for a period of more than two hundred and fifty years. The tide of emigration from Norway to Iceland became so great that it was finally prohibited by royal proclamation. The government instituted by the Icelanders was at first patriarchal and informal, and was moulded mostly by the common law or usages of their native land. Wealth, intellectual force, and enterprise soon gave importance to individuals, and by common consent they became magistrates and chiefs in the little republic. Family pride naturally sprang up, and was fostered by ambition and love of power. The fame of their ancestors, their fortunes and their achievements, were cherished, and religiously handed down by oral tradition from father to son as a precious inheritance. To render the recital of them flow-  
ing

ing and easy, as well as to aid the memory, many of them were turned into poetic measure. Soon an order of poets, or *skalds*, arose, whose office and vocation were to weave these poetic narratives, and recite them at festivals, the general assizes, and on occasions of public gathering. At a later period, historical narratives in prose, of wide and engrossing interest, were skilfully put together and polished for public recital. These were called *Sagas*; and those who moulded them into suitable form, and repeated them on great occasions before the assembled nobles, were called *Sagamen*.<sup>1</sup> Christianity was planted in Iceland in the year 1000. Up to this time, written language, if we except Runic inscriptions,<sup>2</sup> had not been introduced; nor afterward were historical narratives or *sagas* committed to writing, until the middle of the twelfth century. About this period, the *sagas*, that had floated down on the tide of memory for many generations, began to be written out upon parchment.

<sup>1</sup> "At all public meetings, and particularly at the assembly of the Althing, the finest of the old traditions were recited. . . . Every considerable chieftain had long had his *sagaman*. On these occasions, he came forward before the people, and the first of the land were his auditors. The song of the *skald* and the narrative of the *sagaman*, when thus all eyes were fixed upon him, and all ears open to him, behooved not only to be artificial, lively, and attractive, but true. If the recital was without life, it wearied; if it varied from facts with which every auditor was familiar, if it contained falsehoods, the reciter was treated as a braggart and a liar." — *N. M. Peterjén*

*on Ancient Northern Literature*, Guide to Northern Archæology, London, 1848, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> The *Runic* was a method of writing. Rune, derived from *ryn*, means a furrow, or channel. The Runic characters were mostly made up of straight lines, cutting or meeting each other at certain angles, and were for this reason especially convenient for brief inscriptions on wood or stone, for which they were exclusively used. They were employed to fix dates, the ownership of property, to begin a paragraph in aid of the memory, or where the whole story could be told in a word or a line, but were never used in writing books or extended documents of any sort.



ment.<sup>3</sup> The difficulty of obtaining prepared skins was great, and the process of writing was slow and expensive, and few sagas were at first elevated into the written form. But in the thirteenth century, the golden age of Icelandic literature, these writings accumulated to a vast number. After the decline of Icelandic literature, during the seventeenth century or early part of the eighteenth, most, if not all, of these ancient documents, were collected together and transferred to the libraries of Stockholm and Copenhagen.<sup>4</sup>

These

<sup>3</sup> Snorrio Sturleson, a saga writer, who was born in the year 1178, the author of the *Heimskringla*, or Chronicle of the Kings of Norway, in his introduction to that work, gives us a very clear idea of how the sagas were written, and likewise of their credibility. "In this book," he says, "I have had old stories written down, as I have heard them told by intelligent people, concerning chiefs who have held dominion in the northern countries, and who spoke the Danish tongue; and, also, concerning some of their family branches, according to what has been told me. Some of this is found in ancient family registers, in which the pedigrees of kings and other personages of high birth are reckoned up; and part is written down after old songs and ballads, which our forefathers had for their amusement. Now, although we cannot just say what truth there may be in these, yet we have the certainty that old and wise men held them to be true." Again he says: "We rest the foundations of our story principally upon the songs which were sung in the presence of the chiefs themselves, or of their sons, and take all to be true that is found in such poems about their

feats and battles; for although it be the fashion with skalds to praise most those in whose presence they are standing, yet no one would dare to relate to a chief what he and all those who heard it knew to be false and imaginary,—not a true account of his deeds; because that would be mockery, not praise." — *The Heimskringla*, translated by Samuel Laing, London, 1844, Vol. I. pp. 211–213.

<sup>4</sup> "It was fortunate for history, that from the seventeenth century the attention of the *literati*, both in Sweden and Denmark, was turned to the importance of Icelandic manuscripts. Arngrim Johnson, author of *Crymogæa*, assisted by King Christian IV. of Denmark (1643), collected several of them; and Bishop Brynjulf Svendsen sent some of the most important Icelandic codices to Frederic III. (1670), who was a zealous promoter of all intellectual advancement. The Icelander Rugman, who, taken prisoner in the wars of Charles X. of Sweden, had awakened the attention of the Swedish *literati* to the literary treasures of his own country, was sent to the island in 1661 to purchase manuscripts for the Antiquarian Museum of Stockholm, and

These manuscripts embrace a wide range of subjects. Among them are poems, works of fiction, personal memoirs, historical narratives, all more or less pervaded by the old Scandinavian mythology, or the teachings and superstitions of mediæval Christianity. One class can be distinguished from another, veritable history from fiction, with the same facility and moral certainty that we distinguish similar writings of a modern date. The historical saga differs from the saga that deals with fiction as clearly as the dress and bearing of the Cavalier from the dress and bearing of the Roundhead, or the peasant. The purpose of the writer shines through his composition as light through a transparent medium. The historian cannot do his work after the manner of the novelist, nor the novelist in the style of the historian. Both are artists, and neither desires to conceal his art. The work of the one can be distinguished from the work of the other, as clearly as a landscape in Nature from a landscape on canvas, or as a living man from a likeness in bronze or marble. Scandinavian scholars, men of learning, discrimination, and sound judgment, have classified these ancient writings after careful and prolonged study, and no reasonable mind will desire to appeal from their verdict.

Among

and many were afterwards sent thither on the same errand; but Christian V. of Denmark, whose dominion, including Norway, extended to Iceland, issued a prohibition in 1685 against any manuscripts being disposed of to strangers; nor was it until the eminent antiquary Professor Arnas Magnussen was placed

at the head of a royal commission in Iceland, which carried on its labors with unwearied assiduity from 1702 to 1712, that the remaining manuscripts were collected and lodged in the libraries of Copenhagen." — *Beaumont's Discovery of America by the Northmen*, p. xliii.

Among this vast number of Scandinavian manuscripts<sup>5</sup> there are two historical sagas which describe western voyages, undertaken during the twenty-five years that intervened between 985 and 1011. One of them is known as the Saga of Erik the Red, and the other as that of Thorfinn Karlsefne. On these two documents rests all the essential evidence which we have relating to the voyages of the Northmen to America. Allusions are found in several other Scandinavian writings, which may corroborate and confirm the narratives of the two important sagas to which we have just referred, but add nothing to them really essential or important. The Saga of Erik the Red is taken from the Codex Flateyensis,<sup>6</sup> containing a number of sagas, which were collected and written out in their present form at some time between the years 1387 and 1395. The original saga, of which this is a copy, is not known to be now in existence, but is conjectured, from internal evidence drawn from its language

<sup>5</sup> The Arnæ-Magnæan Collection alone contains two thousand volumes of Icelandic and old Northern manuscripts. This collection was made by Arnas Magnussen, a distinguished antiquary, between 1702 and 1712, and is named in honor of him. — *Vide* the Earl of Ellesmere's Guide to Old Northern Archæology, London, 1848, p. 128.

<sup>6</sup> This manuscript, in large folio, beautifully written on parchment, and illuminated, was found in a monastery on the island Flatey, in Bredefjord in Iceland; and from this island takes its name, Codex Flateyensis. It was purchased by Bishop Swendsen of Skalholt, about 1650, for King Frederic

III. It was written, as may be clearly shown by statements contained in it, between 1387 and 1395. It contains several sagas beside that of Erik the Red, which appear to have been written by several hands. The following is a part of the inscription on the first page: "The priest Ion Thordarson has written from Eric Vidforla, and the two sagas of the Olafs; and priest Magnus Thorhallsson has written from thence, and also what is written before, and has illuminated the whole. God Almighty and the Holy Virgin Mary blefs those who wrote and him who dictated." — *Laing's Heimskringla*, London, 1844, Vol. I. pp. 157, 158.

language and style, to have been originally composed in the twelfth century.

The Saga of Thorfinn Karlsefne in its present form is supposed to have been written, at least a part of it, by Hauk Erlendson, for many years governor of Iceland, who died in 1334. Whether it had been committed to writing at an earlier period, and copied by him from a manuscript, or whether he took the narrative from oral tradition and reduced it himself to writing for the first time, is not known.

Both of these documents are declared, by those qualified to judge of the character of ancient writings, to be authentic, and were clearly regarded by their writers as narratives of historical truth.

As the voyages to America recorded in the sagas took place near the beginning of the eleventh century, as is clearly shown by the documents themselves, and written language was not introduced into Iceland till about the middle of the twelfth century, it obviously follows that the narratives of the alleged voyages to America remained only in the form of oral traditions at least one hundred and fifty, and probably two hundred years after the voyages were made. We have likewise already seen that the oldest sagas now existing, and containing the narrative of these voyages, were written from three hundred to four hundred years after the events recorded in them took place.

With these facts clearly in mind, the reader will be able to form his own opinion, to determine for himself what degree of credibility ought to be accorded to these ancient writings. While there is no corroborating evidence outside of Icelandic writings themselves, no monuments in this country confirm-  
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ing the truthfulness of the narratives, they have, nevertheless, all the elements of truth contained in other sagas, which are clearly confirmed by monumental remains. Events occurring in Greenland, recorded in Icelandic sagas of equal antiquity, are established by the undoubted testimony of ancient monuments. This, together with the fact that there is no improbability that such voyages should have been made, render it easy to believe that the narratives contained in the sagas are true in their general outlines and important features.

It is also to be observed, that a denial that these voyages were made to this continent leaves, to those who are thus incredulous, an exceedingly difficult problem to solve. These Icelandic narratives were written, undeniably, long before the discoveries of Columbus in the West Indies, and of John Cabot on our northern Atlantic coast. The authors had, consequently, no information to guide them in fabricating a probable, but nevertheless fictitious, story. They describe, however, with extraordinary truthfulness the general outlines and characteristics of our eastern shores, embracing soil, products, and climate; beginning in the northern regions of perpetual frost, and extending far down along the genial and fruitful coasts of the temperate zone. The accounts given by the voyagers were accepted as true by their contemporaries, and wrought into the permanent historical literature of their country. To believe that the agreement of these narratives with the facts, as they are now known to us, was fortuitous, accidental, a mere matter of chance, is, under all the conditions and circumstances, impossible. In their general scope at least, these narratives have  
therefore



therefore been accepted by the most judicious and dispassionate historical writers throughout the republic of letters.

But when we descend to minor statements and particulars unimportant to the general drift and import of the narratives, we shall doubtless find it difficult to accept them with an unhesitating belief. Narrations that have floated down on the current of oral tradition through many generations are not only likely, but quite sure, to be warped and twisted, to some extent, out of their original form and meaning. Events passing from one narrator to another are shaped and colored, especially in subordinate particulars, by the last mind through which they pass. Each narrator deals with them after the manner of an artist, and, consciously or unconsciously, leaves upon them the impress of his own mind. The careful historian receives, therefore, all traditions, especially those of long standing, *cum grano salis*, and never vouches for their absolute and entire truth.

But it is to be observed that the Icelandic sagamen, in whose custody this Scandinavian lore remained for nearly two hundred years, were professional narrators of events. It was their office and duty carefully to commit to memory and transmit to others what they had themselves received. The professional character of the sagaman was therefore, in some degree, a guarantee for the preservation of the truth. But it was nevertheless impossible that in the long chain of narrators errors should not creep in; that the memory of some of them should not falter at times; and, more than this, that variations should not have been introduced here and there, in obedience to the sagaman's conception of an improved style and a better taste. Few, probably, will be  
fo

so rash as to deny that such variations as these have been incorporated into the text. What these variations were, whether they were many or few, it will be impossible for us ever to determine. But a knowledge or belief that the text, as we read it to-day, is not probably, in all minor particulars, precisely what it was as it was given by the Scandinavian voyagers themselves, when they first rehearsed the story of their discoveries to their friends in Iceland eight hundred and fifty years ago, should lead us to render our interpretations with a corresponding modesty and a restrained assurance.

We have thus endeavored in these pages to present to the reader, in the most abbreviated form possible, the history and character of the evidence which we possess that the Northmen came to the shores of America in the tenth and eleventh centuries. During the last few years, most, if not all, of the writers who have touched upon our early American history, have recognized the voyages of the Northmen to America by statements and allusions more or less extended. The greater part of them have reiterated the conclusions of others, without having themselves arrived at a full and comprehensive knowledge of the subject. To some the means of forming an intelligent opinion have not been within their reach. Others have approached the subject under great disadvantages. The evidence has been presented so overloaded with the deductions of enthusiastic editors, that their judgment has been embarrassed, and their conclusions forestalled. It has been our aim, in offering this collection to the members of the Prince Society, to present the entire evidence on the subject in such a manner that it  
can

can be clearly understood, and weighed dispassionately and without embarrassment.

Our annotations of the sagas are intended to elucidate the meaning of the text, but not to predetermine its application. Our knowledge of the points visited on our coast must depend upon subordinate and minor expressions of the sagas, necessarily subject, as we have seen, to mutations; and questions of this sort may properly be left to the unbiassed judgment and determination of the reader.

The essay of Professor Rafn, in its synopsis of the evidence contained in the sagas, and his attempt to identify localities, the result of careful study and ripe scholarship, can hardly fail to be useful, if, indeed, we shall regard it only as a commentary upon the text, the expression of a personal opinion, but not as a final authority in settling any important historical question. With this view, and this only, it has been introduced into this volume.

E. F. S.

BOSTON, 11 Beacon Street,  
20 February, 1877.









Erik's creek; and when he was ready, Styr and the others followed him out past the islands. Erik told them that he intended to go in search of the land, which Ulf Krage's son Gunnbjörn saw, when he was driven out to the westward in the sea, the time when he found the rocks of Gunnbjörn.<sup>13</sup> He said he would come back to his friends if he found the land. Erik sailed out from Snæfellsjökul;<sup>14</sup> he found land, and came in from the sea to the place which he called Midjökul; it is now called Blaferkr. He then went southwards to see whether it was there habitable land. The first winter he was at Eriksey, nearly in the middle of the eastern settlement; the spring after repaired he to Eriksfjord, and took up there his abode. He removed in summer to the western settlement, and gave to many places names. He was the second winter at Holm in Hrafnsgnipa; but the third summer went he to Iceland, and came with his ship into Breidafjord. He called the land which he had found Greenland, because, quoth he, "people will be attracted thither, if the land has a good name." Erik was in Iceland for the winter, but the summer after went he to colonize the land; he dwelt at Brattahlid in Eriksfjord. Informed people say that the same summer Erik the Red went to colonize Greenland; thirty-five ships sailed from Breidafjord and Borgafjord, but only fourteen arrived; some were driven back, and others were lost. This was fifteen winters before Christianity

<sup>13</sup> Gunnbjarnaker, stated by Bjorn Johnson to have been about midway between Iceland and Greenland, but now concealed, or rendered inaccessible

by the descent of Arctic ice. — *Antiq. Am.*, p. 11, note a. — *Beams's*.

<sup>14</sup> Jökul is used to describe a mountain of snow or ice (glacier), from *jaki*, a fragment of ice. — *Idem*.

Christianity was established by law in Iceland.<sup>15</sup> "The same season Bishop Frederick, and Thorvald the son of Kodran, departed from Iceland."<sup>16</sup> The following men, who went out with Erik, took land in Greenland: Herjulf took Herjulfsfjord (he lived at Herjulfspnefs), Ketil Ketilfjorð, Rafn Rafnsfjord, Sœlve Sœlvedal, Helge Thorbrandsson Alptafjord, Thorbjornglora Siglefjord, Einar Einarsfjord, Hafgrim Hafgrimsfjord and Vatnahverf, Arnlaug Arnlaugsfjord; but some went to the western settlement.

"After the lapse of sixteen winters from the time Erik the Red went to inhabit Greenland, Leif, the son of Erik, going from Greenland into Norway, came in the autumn to Drontheim, when King Olaf, the son of Tryggvius, came thither from Hegeland. Leif brought his ship to Nidaros, and repaired immediately to King Olaf. The king exhorted him, as also the other pagan men who came to him, to accept religion. When the king had easily effected this with Leif, he was baptized, and all his sailors; and he passed the winter with the king, being liberally entertained."

#### BJARNI SEEKS OUT GREENLAND.

A. D. 986.

HERJULF was the son of Bard Herjulfson; he was kinsman to the colonist Ingolf. To Herjulf gave Ingolf land between

<sup>15</sup> Christianity was established in Iceland A.D. 1000. It consequently follows that Erik the Red went to colonize Greenland A.D. 985.

<sup>16</sup> This passage is omitted in Mr.

Beamish's translation, but is found in Rafn's text, as also that relating to the baptism of Leif and his party, which we have placed under quotation-marks. —*Vide Antiq. Am.*, p. 15.

between Vog and Reykjanefs.<sup>17</sup> Herjulf lived first at Drepstock. His wife was named Thorgerd, and Bjarni was their son, a very hopeful man. He conceived, when yet young, a desire to travel abroad, and soon earned for himself both riches and respect; and he was every second winter abroad, every other at home with his father. Soon possessed Bjarni his own ship; and the last winter he was in Norway, Herjulf prepared for a voyage to Greenland with Erik. In the ship with Herjulf was a Christian from the Hebrides,<sup>18</sup> who made a hymn respecting the whirlpool,<sup>19</sup> in which was the following verse: —

“O Thou who triest holy men!  
Now guide me on my way;  
Lord of the earth's wide vault, extend  
Thy gracious hand to me.”

Herjulf lived at Herjulfsnefs; he was a very respectable man. Erik the Red lived at Brattahlid; he was the most looked up to, and every one regulated themselves by him. These were Erik's children: Leif, Thorvald, and Thorstein: but his daughter was called Freydis; she was married to a man who was named Thorvard; they lived in Garde, where is now the Bishop's seat; she was very haughty, but Thorvard was narrow-minded; she was married to him chiefly on account of his money. Heathen were the people in Greenland at this time. Bjarni came to Eyrar with his ship the summer

<sup>17</sup> In Iceland.

<sup>18</sup> The Latin version has *vir Hebræus*.

<sup>19</sup> Hafgerdingar, described by an

ancient Icelandic writer as a dangerous pass in the Greenland ocean. — *Antiq. Amer.*, p. 18, note a. — *Beams's*.



summer of the same year in which his father had failed away in spring. These tidings appeared serious to Bjarni, and he was unwilling to unload his ship. Then his seamen asked him what he would do; he answered that he intended to continue his custom, and pass the winter with his father: "And I will," said he, "bear for Greenland, if ye will give me your company." All said that they would follow his counsel. Then said Bjarni: "Imprudent will appear our voyage, since none of us has been in the Greenland ocean." However, they put to sea so soon as they were ready, and sailed for three days, until the land was out of sight under the water; but then the fair wind fell, and there arose north winds and fogs, and they knew not where they were; and thus it continued for many days. After that saw they the sun again, and could discover the sky; they now made sail, and sailed for that day, before they saw land, and counselled with each other about what land that could be, and Bjarni said that he thought it could not be Greenland. They asked whether he wished to sail to this land or not. "My advice is," said he, "to sail close to the land;" and so they did, and soon saw that the land was without mountains, and covered with wood, and had small heights. Then left they the land on their larboard side, and let the stern turn from the land. Afterwards they sailed two days before they saw another land. They asked if Bjarni thought that this was Greenland, but he said that he as little believed this to be Greenland as the other; "because in Greenland are said to be very high ice-hills." They soon approached the land, and saw that it was a flat land covered with wood. Then the fair wind fell, and the sailors said that it seemed to them  
most

most advisable to land there; but Bjarni was unwilling to do so. They pretended that they were in want of both wood and water. "Ye have no want of either of the two," said Bjarni; for this, however, he met with some reproaches from the sailors. He bade them make sail, and so was done; they turned the prow from the land, and, failing out into the open sea for three days, with a south-west wind, saw then the third land; and this land was high, and covered with mountains and ice-hills. Then asked they whether Bjarni would land there, but he said that he would not: "for to me this land appears little inviting." Therefore did they not lower the sails, but held on along this land, and saw that it was an island; again turned they the stern from the land, and sailed out into the sea with the same fair wind; but the breeze freshened, and Bjarni then told them to shorten sail, and not sail faster than their ship and ship's gear could hold out. They sailed now four days,<sup>20</sup> when they saw the fourth land. Then asked they Bjarni whether he thought that this was Greenland or not. Bjarni answered: "This is the most like Greenland, according to what I have been told about it, and here will we steer for land." So did they, and landed in the evening under a nefs; and there was a boat by the nefs, and just here lived Bjarni's father, and from him has the nefs taken its name, and is since called Herjulfsnefs. Bjarni now repaired to his father's,

<sup>20</sup> A day's sail was estimated by the Northmen at from twenty-seven to thirty geographical miles.—*Beamsifh*. To determine what coasts were visited, as the mariner's compass had not then been discovered, the important ele-

ments in the calculation are the direction of the wind, the length of time spent in sailing from one point to another, the distance passed over in a given time, and the general character of the countries discovered.

father's, and gave up seafaring, and was with his father so long as Herjulf lived, and afterwards he dwelt there after his father.

VOYAGE OF LEIF ERIKSON.

*Here beginneth the Narrative of the Greenlanders.*

THE next thing now to be related is, that Bjarni Herjulfson went out from Greenland, and visited Erik Jarl,<sup>21</sup> and the Jarl received him well. Bjarni told about his voyages, that he had seen unknown lands, and people thought that he had shown no curiosity, when he had nothing to relate about these countries, and this became somewhat a matter of reproach to him. Bjarni became one of the Jarl's courtiers, and came back to Greenland the summer after. There was now much talk about voyages of discovery. Leif, the son of Erik the Red, of Brattahlid, went to Bjarni Herjulfson, and bought the ship of him, and engaged men for it, so that there were thirty-five men in all. Leif asked his father Erik to be the leader on the voyage; but Erik excused himself, saying that he was now pretty well stricken in years, and could not now, as formerly, hold out all the hardships of the sea. Leif said that still he was the one of the family whom good fortune would soonest attend; and Erik gave in to Leif's request, and rode from home so soon as they were ready; and it was but a short way to the ship. The horse stumbled that Erik rode, and he fell off, and bruised

<sup>21</sup> Erik, Jarl (Earl) of Norway. This in the year 994. — *Antiq. Amer.*, p. is supposed by Rafn to have happened xxix. — *Beams's*.



bruised his foot. Then said Erik, "It is not ordained that I should discover more countries than that which we now inhabit, and we should make no further attempt in company." Erik went home to Brattahlid; but Leif repaired to the ship, and his comrades with him, thirty-five men. There was a southern<sup>22</sup> on the voyage, who was named Tyrker. Now prepared they their ship, and sailed out into the sea when they were ready, and then found that land first which Bjarni had found last. There sailed they to the land, and cast anchor, and put off boats, and went ashore, and saw there no grafs. Great icebergs were over all up the country; but like a plain of flat stones was all from the sea to the mountains, and it appeared to them that this land had no good qualities. Then said Leif, "We have not done like Bjarni about this land, that we have not been upon it; now will I give the land a name, and call it HELLULAND."<sup>23</sup> Then went they on board, and after that sailed out to sea, and found another land; they sailed again to the land, and cast anchor, then put off boats and went on shore. This land was flat, and covered with wood, and white sands were far around where they went, and the shore was low. Then said Leif, "This land shall be named after its qualities, and called MARKLAND<sup>24</sup> (woodland)." They then immediately returned to the ship. Now sailed they thence into the open sea with a north-east wind, and were two days at sea

<sup>22</sup> Sudrmadr, supposed to mean a German, as the terms Sudrmenn and Thydverfkirmenn are used promiscuously to distinguish the natives of Germany, by old Northern writers. — *Antiq. Amer.*, p. 28, note a. — *Beamsifh.*

<sup>23</sup> From *hella*, a flat stone, and *land*, flat-stone land, or Helluland. Supposed by Professor Rafn to be Newfoundland.

<sup>24</sup> Nova Scotia, according to Professor Rafn.

sea before they saw land, and they sailed thither and came to an island which lay to the eastward of the land,<sup>25</sup> and went up there, and looked round them in good weather, and observed that there was dew upon the grass; and it so happened that they touched the dew with their hands, and raised the fingers to the mouth, and they thought that they had never before tasted any thing so sweet.

After that they went to the ship, and sailed into a sound, which lay between the island and a ness (promontory), which ran out to the eastward of the land; and then steered westwards past the ness. It was very shallow at ebb tide, and their ship stood up, so that it was far to see from the ship to the water.

But so much did they desire to land, that they did not give themselves time to wait until the water again rose under their ship, but ran at once on shore, at a place where a river flows out of a lake; but so soon as the waters rose up under the ship, then took they boats, and rowed to the ship, and floated it up to the river, and thence into the lake, and there cast anchor, and brought up from the ship their skin cots,<sup>26</sup> and made there booths.<sup>27</sup>

After

<sup>25</sup> Literally "northward of the land" (nordr af landinu); but the Editor (Professor Rafn) shows that the Northmen placed this point of the compass nearly in the position of our east."—*Antiq. Amer.*, p. 428.—*Beamsish.*

<sup>26</sup> *Húdföt*, from *húd*, skin, and *fat*, a case, or covering, being, strictly speaking, a skin bag, or pouch, in which the ancients were accustomed to keep their clothes and other articles on a journey: the same was used for a bed on

ship-board, as appears in the *Laxdæla Saga*, p. 116, where Thurið says, "hún gekk at húdfati því, er Geirmundr ívafi,"—"she went to the couch, where Geirmund slept." It thus answers to the *uter* of the Romans, and *στροματοδεσμὸς* of the Greeks.—*Antiq. Amer.*, p. 31.—*Idem.*

<sup>27</sup> *Búdir*, f. pl. of *búð*, from *búa*, to remain or inhabit; hence, probably, the Eng. *booth*.—*Idem.*

After this took they counsel, and formed the resolution of remaining there for the winter, and built there large houses. There was no want of salmon either in the river or in the lake, and larger salmon than they had before seen. The nature of the country was, as they thought, so good, that cattle would not require house-feeding in winter, for there came no frost in winter, and little did the grass wither there. Day and night were more equal than in Greenland or Iceland, for on the shortest day was the sun above the horizon from half-past seven in the forenoon till half-past four in the afternoon.<sup>28</sup>

But when they had done with the house-building, Leif said to his comrades: "Now will I divide our men into two parts, and have the land explored; and the half of the men shall remain at home at the house, while the other half explore the land; but, however, not go further than that they can come home in the evening, and they should not separate." Now they did so for a time, and Leif changed about, so that the one day he went with them, and the other remained at home in the house. Leif was a great and strong man, grave and well favored, therewith sensible and moderate in all things.

LEIF THE LUCKY FOUND FOLK UPON A ROCK IN THE SEA.

It happened one evening that a man of the party was missing, and this was Tyrker the German. This took Leif much

<sup>28</sup> The following is the substance of a valuable note introduced by Mr. Beamish *in loco*: "This subject has been elucidated in an interesting article 'On the Ancient Scandinavians' Division of the Time of the Day,' by Finn Magnúsen,

much to heart, for Tyrker had been long with his father and him, and loved Leif much in his childhood. Leif now took his people severely to task, and prepared to seek for Tyrker, and took twelve men with him. But when they had

Magnusen, published in the Memoirs of the Society of Northern Antiquaries, by which it appears that—

“The ancient Scandinavians divided the heavens or the horizon into eight grand divisions, and the times of the day according to the sun’s apparent motion through these divisions, the passage through each of which they supposed to occupy a period of three hours. The day was therefore divided into portions of time corresponding with these eight divisions, each of which was called an *eykt*, signifying an eighth part. This *eykt* was again divided, like each of the grand divisions of the heavens, into two smaller and equal portions, called *stund*, or *mal*. In order to determine these divisions of time, the inhabitants of each place carefully observed the diurnal course of the sun, and noted the terrestrial objects over which it seemed to stand. Such a natural or artificial object was called in Iceland *dagsmark* (day-mark). They were also led to fix these daymarks by a division of the horizon according to the principal winds, as well as by the wants of their domestic economy: the shepherd’s rising time, for instance, was called *Hirdis rífmál*, which corresponds with half-past 4 o’clock, A.M.; and this was the beginning of the natural day (*dægr*) of twenty-four hours. Reckoning from the *hirdis rífmál*, the eight *stund*, or eighth half *eykt*, terminated exactly at half-past 4 o’clock in the afternoon; and therefore this particular period was called *κατ’ ἐξοχὴν* ΕΥΚΤ. This *eykt*, strictly speaking, commenced at 3 o’clock, P.M., and ended at half-past

4, P.M., when it was said to be in *eyktarfladr*, or the termination of the *eykt*. The precise moment that the sun appeared in this place indicated the termination of the artificial day (*dagr*) and half the natural day (*dægr*), and was therefore held especially deserving of notice: the hours of labor, also, are supposed to have ended at this time. Six o’clock, A.M., was called *Midr morgun*; half-past 7, A.M., *Dagmal*; 9, A.M., *Dagverdarmal*, &c. Winter was considered to commence in Iceland about the 17th October; and Bishop Thorlacius, the calculator of the Astronomical Calendar, fixes sunrise in the south of Iceland on the 17th October, at half-past 7, A.M. At this hour, according to the Saga, it rose in Vinland on the shortest day, and set at half-past 4, P.M., which data fix the latitude of the place at  $41^{\circ} 43' 10''$ .—See *Antiq. Amer.*, pp. 435–438, *Mémoires de la Société Royale des Antiquaires du Nord*, 1836, 1837, p. 165; and *Dial of the Ancient Northmen*, in Appendix to Beamish. Professor Rafn makes the latitude from the above data  $41^{\circ} 24' 10''$  [*Antiq. Amer.*, p. 436]; but if, as is to be presumed, the observation was made when the sun had completely risen, and his lower edge appeared to touch the horizon, it could not be less than  $41^{\circ} 43' 10''$ : however, the difference is unimportant as regards the locality, for nothing more than an approximation to the correct latitude of the place could be expected from the rude method of calculating time which was then practised by the Northmen.” *Vide postea*, p. 126.

had gotten a short way from the house, then came Tyrker towards them, and was joyfully received. Leif soon saw that his foster-father was not in his right senses. Tyrker had a high forehead and unsteady eyes, was freckled in the face, small and mean in stature, but excellent in all kinds of artifice. Then said Leif to him: "Why wert thou so late, my fosterer, and separated from the party?" He now spoke first, for a long time in German, and rolled his eyes about to different sides, and twisted his mouth; but they did not understand what he said. After a time he spoke Norsk.<sup>29</sup> "I have not been much further off, but still have I something new to tell of; I found vines and grapes." "But is that true, my fosterer?" quoth Leif. "Surely is it true," replied he, "for I was bred up in a land where there is no want of either vines or grapes." They slept now for the night, but in the morning Leif said to his sailors: "We will now set about two things, in that the one day we gather grapes, and the other day cut vines and fell trees, so from thence will be a loading for my ship;" and that was the counsel taken, and it is said their long-boat was filled with grapes. Now was a cargo cut down for the ship, and when the spring came they got ready, and sailed away; and Leif gave the land a name after its qualities, and called it VINLAND.

They sailed now into the open sea, and had a fair wind until they saw Greenland, and the mountains below the jöklers. Then a man put in his word and said to Leif:

"Why

<sup>29</sup> Norrænu, *i.e.* the Northern tongue (Dönsk tunga), being the language then common to Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Iceland, Greenland, and part of Britain. — *Antiq. Amer.*, p. 35. — *Bea-mish*.



"Why do you steer so close to the wind?" Leif answered: "I attend to my steering, and something more; and can ye not see any thing?" They answered that they could not observe any thing extraordinary. "I know not," said Leif, "whether I see a ship or a rock." Now looked they, and said it was a rock. But he saw so much sharper than they, that he perceived there were men upon the rock. "Now let us," said Leif, "hold our wind, so that we come up to them, if they should want our assistance; and the necessity demands that we should help them; and if they should not be kindly disposed, the power is in our hands, and not in theirs." Now sailed they under the rock, and lowered their sails, and cast anchor, and put out another little boat, which they had with them. Then asked Tyrker who their leader was. He called himself Thorer, and said he was a Northman. "But what is *thy* name?" said he. Leif told his name. "Art thou a son of Erik the Red, of Brattahlid?" quoth he. Leif answered that so it was. "Now will I," said Leif, "take ye all on board my ship, and as much of the goods as the ship can hold." They accepted the offer, and sailed thereupon to Eriksfjord with the cargo; and thence to Brattahlid, where they unloaded the ship. After that, Leif invited Thorer and his wife Gudrid, and three other men to stop with him, and got berths for the other seamen, as well Thorer's as his own, elsewhere. Leif took fifteen men from the rock; he was, after that, called Leif the Lucky. Leif had now earned both riches and respect. The same winter came a heavy sickness among Thorer's people, and carried off as well Thorer himself as many of his men. This winter died also Erik the Red. Now was there much  
talk

talk about Leif's voyage to Vinland; and Thorvald, his brother, thought that the land had been much too little explored. Then said Leif to Thorvald: "Thou canst go with my ship, brother, if thou wilt, to Vinland; but I wish first that the ship should go and fetch the timber, which Thorer had upon the rock;" and so was done.

THORVALD REPAIRS TO VINLAND.

Now Thorvald made ready for this voyage with thirty men, and took counsel thereon with Leif, his brother. Then made they their ship ready, and put to sea, and nothing is told of their voyage until they came to Leif's booths, in Vinland. There they laid up their ship, and spent a pleasant winter,<sup>30</sup> and caught fish for their support. But in the spring, said Thorvald, they should make ready the ship, and some of the men should take the ship's long-boat round the western part of the land, and explore there during the summer. To them appeared the land fair and woody, and but a short distance between the wood and the sea, and white sands; there were many islands, and much shallow water. They found neither dwellings of men or beasts, except upon an island, to the westward, where they found a corn-shed of wood;<sup>31</sup> but many works of men they found not; and they then went back and came to Leif's booths in the autumn. But the  
next

<sup>30</sup> Probably in A.D. 1002, 1003.

<sup>31</sup> Kornhjálmr af tré, from *korn*, corn, and *hjálmr*, a covering, hence helmet-

shed; which signification also obtains in the Danish language. — *Antiq. Amer.*, p. 41, note a. — *Beamsifh*.



next summer<sup>32</sup> went Thorvald eastward with the ship, and round the land to the northward. Here came a heavy storm upon them when off a nefs, so that they were driven on shore, and the keel broke off from the ship, and they remained here a long time, and repaired their ship. Then said Thorvald to his companions: "Now will I that we fix up the keel here upon the nefs, and call it Keelnefs (Kjalarnefs), and so did they. After that they sailed away round the eastern shores of the land, and into the mouths of the friths, which lay nearest thereto, and to a point of land which stretched out, and was covered all over with wood. There they came to with the ship, and shoved out a plank to the land, and Thorvald went up the country with all his companions. He then said: "Here is beautiful, and here would I like to raise my dwelling." Then went they to the ship, and saw upon the sands within the promontory three elevations, and went thither, and saw there three skin boats (canoes), and three men under each. Then divided they their people, and caught them all, except one, who got away with his boat. They killed the other eight, and then went back to the cape, and looked round them, and saw some heights inside of the frith, and supposed that these were dwellings. After that, so great a drowsiness came upon them that they could not keep awake, and they all fell asleep. Then came a shout over them, so that they all awoke. Thus said the shout: "Wake thou, Thorvald! and all thy companions, if thou wilt preserve life, and return thou to thy ship, with all thy men, and leave the land without delay." Then rushed out from the interior of the frith

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<sup>32</sup> Probably A.D. 1004.

an innumerable crowd of skin boats, and made towards them. Thorvald said then: "We will put out the battle-skreen,<sup>33</sup> and defend ourselves as well as we can, but fight little against them." So did they; and the Skrælings<sup>34</sup> shot at them for a time, but afterwards ran away, each as fast as he could. Then asked Thorvald his men if they had gotten any wounds; they answered that no one was wounded. "I have gotten a wound under the arm," said he, "for an arrow fled between the edge of the ship and the shield, in under my arm; and here is the arrow, and it will prove a mortal wound to me. Now counsel I ye, that ye get ready instantly to depart, but ye shall bear me to that cape, where I thought it best to dwell; it may be that a true word fell from my mouth, that I should dwell there for a time; there shall ye bury me, and set up crosses at my head and feet, and call the place KROSSANESS, for ever in all time to come." Greenland was then Christianized, but Erik the Red died before Christianity was introduced. Now Thorvald died; but they did all things according to his directions, and then went away, and returned to their companions, and told to each other the tidings which they knew, and dwelt there for the winter, and gathered grapes and vines to load the ship. But in the spring<sup>35</sup> they made ready

<sup>33</sup> Vigfleka, from *vig*, battle, and *fleki*, or *flaki*, flat and broad; hence a shield made of large planks of wood. — *Beamish*.

<sup>34</sup> Skrælingar. Various definitions have been given of this term, some authors attributing it to the low stature of the Esquimaux, who are also called *Smalingar* (diminutive men) by Ice-

landic authors; and others deducing it from *skræla*, to make dry, in allusion to their withered appearance. The word *skrækja*, to cry out, has also been given as the etymology of the term, from their habit of shouting. — *Antiq. Amer.*, p. 45, note *a*. — *Idem*.

<sup>35</sup> Doubtless A.D. 1005.

ready to sail to Greenland, and came with their ship in Eriksfjord, and could now tell great tidings to Leif.

THORSTEIN ERIKSON DIES IN THE WESTERN SETTLEMENT.

MEANTIME it had happened in Greenland, that Thorstein in Eriksfjord married Gudrid, Thorbjörn's daughter, who had been formerly married to Thorer the Eastman,<sup>36</sup> as is before related. Now Thorstein Erikson conceived a desire to go to Vinland after the body of Thorvald his brother; and he made ready the same ship, and chose great and strong men for the crew, and had with him twenty-five men, and Gudrid his wife. They sailed away so soon as they were ready, and came out of sight of the land. They drove about in the sea the whole summer, and knew not where they were; and when the first week of winter<sup>37</sup> was past, then landed they in Lysefjord in Greenland, in the western settlement. Thorstein sought shelter for them, and procured lodging for all his crew; but he himself and his wife were without lodging, and they, therefore, remained some two nights in the ship. Then was Christianity yet new in Greenland.<sup>38</sup> Now it came to pass one day that some people repaired early in the morning to their tent, and the leader of the party asked who was in the tent. Thorstein answered: "Here are two persons

<sup>36</sup> Aufsmadr. Such were the Norwegians often called by the Icelanders, Norway lying to the east of their island. — *Antiq. Amer.*, p. 47, note a. — *Beamsifh.*

<sup>37</sup> Whilst the Julian calendar, introduced after Christianity, was in use

amongst the Icelanders, they considered winter to commence about the 17th October. — *Finn Magnúsen, Ap. Mém. des Antiq. du Nord*, 1836, 1837, p. 179. — *Idem.*

<sup>38</sup> Probably in A.D. 1005.

persons, but who asks the question?" "Thorstein is my name," said the other, "and I am called Thorstein the Black, but my business here is to bid ye both, thou and thy wife, to come and stop at my house." Thorstein said that he would talk the matter over with his wife; but she told him to decide, and he accepted the bidding. "Then will I come after ye in the morning with horses, for I want nothing to entertain ye both; but it is very wearisome at my house, for we are there but two, I and my wife, and I am very morose; I have also a different religion from yours, and yet hold I that for the better which ye have." Now came he after them in the morning with horses, and they went to lodge with Thorstein the Black, who shewed them every hospitality. Gudrid was a grave and dignified woman, and therewith sensible, and knew well how to carry herself among strangers. Early that winter came sickness amongst Thorstein Erikson's men, and there died many of his people. Thorstein had coffins made for the bodies of those who died, and caused them to be taken out to the ship, and there laid; "for I will," said he, "have all the bodies taken to Eriksfjord in the summer." Now it was not long before the sickness came also into Thorstein's house, and his wife, who was called Grimhild, took the sickness first: she was very large, and strong as a man, but still did the sickness master her. And soon after that, the disease attacked Thorstein Erikson, and they both lay ill at the same time; and Grimhild, the wife of Thorstein the Black, died. But when she was dead, then went Thorstein out of the room after a plank to lay the body upon. Then said Gudrid: "Stay not long away, my Thorstein!" He an-

swered

swered that so it should be. Then said Thorstein Erikson: "Strangely now is our house-mother<sup>39</sup> going on, for she pushes herself up on her elbows, and stretches her feet out of bed, and feels for her shoes." At that moment came in the husband Thorstein, and Grimhild then lay down, and every beam in the room creaked. Now Thorstein made a coffin for Grimhild's body, and took it out, and buried it; but although he was a large and powerful man, it took all his strength to bring it out of the place. Now the sickness attacked Thorstein Erikson, and he died, which his wife Gudrid took much to heart. They were then all in the room; Gudrid had taken her seat upon a chair beyond the bench, upon which Thorstein, her husband, had lain; then Thorstein the host took Gudrid from the chair upon his knees, and sat down with her upon another bench, just opposite Thorstein's body. He comforted her in many ways, and cheered her up, and promised to go with her to Eriksfjord with her husband's body and those of his companions; "and I will also," added he, "bring many servants to comfort and amuse thee." She thanked him. Then Thorstein Erikson sat himself up on the bench, and said: "Where is Gudrid?" Three times said he that, but she answered not. Then said she to Thorstein the host: "Shall I answer his questions, or not?" He counselled her not to answer. After this went Thorstein the host across the floor, and sat himself on a chair, but Gudrid sat upon his knees, and he said: "What wilt thou, Namefake?" After a little he answered: "I wish much to tell Gudrid her fortune, in order that she may be the better reconciled to my

<sup>39</sup> Húsfreyju.

my death, for I have now come to a good resting-place; but this can I tell thee, Gudrid, that thou wilt be married to an Icelander, and ye shall live long together, and have a numerous posterity, powerful, distinguished, and excellent, sweet and well favored; ye shall remove from Greenland to Norway, and from thence to Iceland; there shall ye live long, and thou shalt outlive him. Then wilt thou go abroad, and travel to Rome, and come back again to Iceland, to thy house; and then will a church be built, and thou wilt reside there, and become a nun, and there wilt thou die."<sup>40</sup> And when he had said these words, Thorstein fell back, and his corpse was set in order, and taken to the ship. Now Thorstein the host kept well all the promises which he had made to Gudrid; in spring<sup>41</sup> he sold his farm, and his cattle, and betook himself to the ship, with Gudrid, and all that he possessed; he made ready the ship, and procured men therefor, and then sailed to Eriksfjord. The bodies were now buried by the Church. Gudrid repaired to Leif in Brattahlid; but Thorstein the Black made himself a dwelling at Eriksfjord, and dwelt there so long as he lived, and was looked upon as a very able man.

Vinland

<sup>40</sup> This prophetic announcement of Thorstein Erikson is highly characteristic of the superstition of the times, and, although pertaining to the marvellous, is not the less corroborative of the authenticity of the narrative. "Such incidents," says Sir Walter Scott, "make an invariable part of the history of a rude age, and the chronicles which do not afford these marks of human credulity may be grievously suspected as being deficient in authen-

ticity." — *Abstract of Eyrbyggja Saga, Miscell. Prose Works*, Vol. V. p. 365. This interesting abstract first appeared in "Illustrations of Northern Antiquities," 4to, Edinburgh, 1814, a work of high value and great promise, but which the want of public support compelled the distinguished compilers and antiquaries, Jamieson and Weber, to discontinue. — *Beamsish*.

<sup>41</sup> A.D. 1006.



## VINLAND THE GOOD IS DISCOVERED.

*From the Heimskringla, or History of the Norwegian Kings, according to the 2d Vellum Codex of the Arnæ-Magnæan Collection, No. 45, Folio.*

THE same winter<sup>42</sup> was Leif, the son of Erik the Red, with King Olaf, in good repute, and embraced Christianity. But the summer that Gissur went to Iceland, King Olaf sent Leif to Greenland, in order to make known Christianity there; he failed the same summer to Greenland. He found, in the sea, some people on a wreck, and helped them; the same time discovered he Vinland the Good, and came in harvest to Greenland. He had with him a priest, and other clerks, and went to dwell at Brattahlid with Erik, his father. Men called him afterwards Leif the Lucky; but Erik, his father, said that these two things went one against the other, inasmuch as Leif had saved the crew of the ship, but brought evil men to Greenland; namely, the priests.

## LEIF CHRISTIANIZES GREENLAND.

*From the History of Olaf Tryggvason, Chap. 231, 2d Vellum Codex of Arnæ-Magnæan Collection, No. 61, 54, 53, Folio.*

THE same spring sent King Olaf, as is before related, Gissur and Hjelte to Iceland. Then sent the king also Leif Erikson to Greenland to make known Christianity there.

<sup>42</sup> The same year that he sent Gissur and Hiate to Iceland, when Christianity was introduced by law into that country; viz., A.D. 1000. — *Vide Laing's Heimskringla*, London, 1844, Vol. I. p. 465; also antea, note 3.



there.<sup>43</sup> The king gave him a priest, and some other holy men, to baptize the people there, and teach them the true faith. Leif sailed that summer to Greenland; he took up in the sea the men of a ship which was entirely lost, and lay a complete broken wreck; and on this same voyage discovered he Vinland the Good, and came in the end of the summer to Greenland, and went to live at Brattahlid with Erik, his father. People called him afterwards Leif the Lucky; but Erik his father said that these two things went against each other, since Leif had assisted the crew of the ship, and saved them from death, and that he had brought injurious men (so called he the priests) to Greenland; but still, after the counsel and instigation of Leif, was Erik baptized, and all the people in Greenland.

SAGA OF THORFINN KARLSEFNE.<sup>44</sup>

*Genealogy of Thorfinn Karlsefne, his Voyage to Greenland, and Marriage with Gudrid, the Widow of Thorstein Erikson.*

## CONCERNING THORD OF HÖFDA.

THERE was a man named Thord, who lived at Höfda in Höfda strand; he married Fridgerda, daughter of Thoror Hyma,

<sup>43</sup> For the rigorous manner in which King Olaf reduced his subjects to the Christian faith, see *Laing's Heimskringla*, London, 1844, Vol. I. Saga VI.

<sup>44</sup> Next in importance and interest to the Saga of Erik the Red is that of Thorfinn, with the significant sur-

name of Karlsefne; *i.e.*, destined to become a great man. This distinguished individual was a wealthy and powerful Icelandic merchant, descended from an illustrious line of Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, Irish, and Scottish ancestors, some of whom were kings, or of royal

Hyma, and Fridgerda, daughter of Kjarval, king of the Irish. Thord was the son of Bjarni Byrdufmjör, son of Thorvald Ryg, son of Afleik, son of Bjarni Jarnfid, son of Ragnar Lodbrok. They had a son called Snorri; he married Thorhild Rjúpa, daughter of Thord Gellar; their son was Thord Hesthöfði. Thord's son was named THORFINN KARLSEFNE; Thorfinn's mother was called Thorum. Thorfinn took to trading voyages, and was thought an able seaman and merchant. One summer Karlsefne fitted out his ship, and purposed a voyage to Greenland. Snorri Thorbrandson, of Alptafjord, went with him, and there were forty men in the ship. There was a man called Bjarni Grimolfson,

royal blood. The narrative of his exploits is taken from two ancient Icelandic MSS. not previously known to the *literati*, and one of which, there is every reason to believe, is a genuine autograph of the celebrated Hauk Erlendson, who was lagman, or chief governor, of Iceland in 1295, and one of the compilers of the *Landnámabók*: he was also a descendant of Karlsefne in the ninth generation. This very remarkable Saga forms part of the *Arnæ-Magnæan Collection*, and besides short notices of the discoveries of the earlier voyagers, which are more fully described in the Saga of Erik the Red, gives detailed accounts of voyages to and discoveries in America, carried on by Karlsefne and his companions for a period of three years, commencing in 1007. Some discrepancies and misnomers appear in those parts of the narrative which treat of the personages and events recorded in the preceding Saga; but they are only such as to preclude all suspicion of confederacy or fraud on the part of the writers, as all

the *main facts* are substantially the same in both; and the circumstance of the Saga of Erik having been written in Greenland, while that of Karlsefne was written in Iceland, is sufficient to account for these variations. The same circumstance, also, renders the former the best authority in all matters of detail connected with Greenland, while the other must be considered more correct respecting occurrences relating to Iceland. These differences are pointed out in the notes; and where any minor points of interesting detail connected with the voyage of Karlsefne appear in the Saga of Erik the Red, while they are absent in Karlsefne's Saga, they have been supplied from that of Erik, the interpolation being pointed out.

Torfaeus imagined that the Saga of Thorfinn Karlsefne was lost, and the only knowledge he had of its contents was derived from some corrupt extracts contained in the collection of materials for the history of ancient Greenland, left by the Icelandic yeoman, Björn Johnson of Skardso. — *Beamsifh.*

Grimolfson, of Breidafjord; another called Thorhall Gamlaſon, an Eaſtfjordish man; they fitted out their ſhip the ſame ſummer for Greenland: there were alſo forty men in the ſhip. Karlſefne and the others put to ſea with theſe two ſhips, ſo ſoon as they were ready. Nothing is told about how long they were at ſea, but it is to be related that both theſe ſhips came to Eriksfjord in the autumn.<sup>45</sup> Erik<sup>46</sup> rode to the ſhip together with ſeveral of the inhabitants, and they began to deal in a friendly manner. Both the ſhips' captains begged Erik (Leif) to take as much of the goods as he wiſhed; but Erik (Leif), on his ſide, ſhewed them hoſpitality, and bade the crews of theſe two ſhips home, for the winter, to his own houſe at Brattahlid. This the merchants accepted, and thanked him. Then were their goods removed to Brattahlid; there was no want of large out-houſes to keep the goods in, neither plenty of every thing that was required: wherefore they were well ſatiſfied in the winter. But towards Yule Erik (Leif) began to be ſilent, and was leſs cheerful than he uſed to be. One time turned Karlſefne towards Erik (Leif) and ſaid: "Haſt thou any ſorrow, Erik, my friend? people think to ſee that thou art leſs cheerful than thou wert wont to be; thou haſt entertained

<sup>45</sup> A.D. 1006.

<sup>46</sup> This is evidently a miſnomer throughout the Saga, and ſhould be Leif, who was now in poſſeſſion of the paternal eſtate, his father Erik having died, as ſtated in the former narrative, the winter after Leif's return from Vinland (1001), and conſequently five years previous to the events recorded here. The Saga of Erik the Red, it muſt be recollected, appears to have

been written in Greenland, and that of Thorfinn Karlſefne in Iceland, which will account for this and other discrepancies between the two narratives. — *Beamiſh.*

This does not ſeem to us to account for this error. That it was an error is obvious. The manner in which the Sagas came into written form furniſh numberleſs ways in which errors might creep in. — *Vide* Introduction.

entertained us with the greatest splendor, and we are bound to return it to thee with such services as we can command; say now, what troubles thee?" Erik (Leif) answered: "Ye are friendly and thankful, and I have no fear as concerns our intercourse, that ye will feel the want of attention; but, on the other hand, I fear that when ye come elsewhere it will be said that ye have never passed a worse Yule than that which now approaches, when Erik the Red entertained ye at Brattahlid, in Greenland." "It shall not be so, Yeoman!" said Karlsefne; "we have in our ship both malt and corn; take as much as thou desirest thereof, and make ready a feast as grand as thou wilt!" This Erik (Leif) accepted; and now preparation was made for the feast of Yule, and this feast was so grand that people thought they had hardly ever seen the like pomp in a poor land. And after Yule, Karlsefne disclosed to Erik (Leif) that he wished to marry Gudrid, for it seemed to him as if he must have the power in this matter. Erik answered favorably, and said that she must follow her fate, and that he had heard nothing but good of him; and it ended so that Thorfinn married Thurid (Gudrid); and then was the feast extended; and their marriage was celebrated; and this happened at Brattahlid, in the winter.

#### THE VINLAND VOYAGE.

IN Brattahlid began people to talk much about, that Vinland the Good should be explored, and it was said that a voyage thither would be particularly profitable by reason of the fertility of the land; and it went so far that Karlsefne  
and

and Snorri made ready their ship to explore the land in the spring. With them went also the before-named men called Bjarni and Thorhall, with their ship. There was a man called Thorvard; he married Freydis, a natural daughter of Erik the Red; he went also with them, and Thorvald the son of Erik,<sup>47</sup> and Thorhall who was called the hunter; he had long been with Erik, and served him as huntsman in summer, and steward in winter; he was a large man, and strong, black, and like a giant, silent and foul-mouthed in his speech, and always egged on Erik to the worst: he was a bad Christian: he was well acquainted with uninhabited parts: he was in the ship with Thorvard and Thorvald. They had the ship which Thorbjörn had brought out [from Iceland]. They had in all one hundred and sixty men<sup>48</sup> when they sailed to the western settlement, and from thence to Bjanney. Then sailed they two days to the south; then saw they land, and put off boats, and explored the land, and found there great flat stones, many of which were twelve  
ells

<sup>47</sup> Here is again evidently some confusion of names, as Thorvald Erikson's death has been previously related in the Saga of Erik the Red, and Karlsefne was now married to his widow Gudrid: it seems probable that some other Thorvald accompanied Karlsefne on this voyage. — See *Antiq. Amer.*, *Præfatio*, p. xiv.

In the preceding section it is stated that Thorfinn married Thurid: she was sometimes also called Gudrid. Professor Rafn thinks it probable that she was called by the former in childhood, which was a pagan name derived from the god Thor, but afterward for religious reasons Gudrid was adopted in its place. — *Vide Beamsifh.*

<sup>48</sup> Literally "40 men and a hundred" [40 manna oh hundrad], but the great or long hundred must be understood, consisting of 12 decades, or 120. — *Antiq. Amer.*, p. 137, note *b*. Thus Tegner, describing the drinking hall of Frithiof: —

"Ei femhundrade män [til tio tolfster på hundrat]  
Fyllde den rymliga sal, när de samlats att  
dricka om Julen."

*Frithiofs Saga* III., p. 18.

Not five hundred men (though *ten twelves*  
you count to the hundred)  
Could fill that wide hall, when they gathered  
to banquet at Yule. — *Beamsifh.*



ells broad: foxes were there. They gave the land a name, and called it HELLULAND.<sup>49</sup> Then sailed they two days, and turned from the south to the south-east, and found a land covered with wood, and many wild beasts upon it: an island lay there out from the land to the south-east; there killed they a bear, and called the place afterwards Bear island,<sup>50</sup> but the land MARKLAND. Thence sailed they far to the southward along the land, and came to a ness; the land lay upon the right; there were long and sandy strands. They rowed to land, and found there upon the ness the keel of a ship, and called the place Kjalarness,<sup>51</sup> and the strands they called Furdustrands, for it was long to sail by them. Then became the land indented with coves; they ran the ship into a cove. King Olaf Tryggvason had given Leif two Scotch people, a man called Haki, and a woman called Hekja; they were swifter than beasts. These people were in the ship with Karlsefne; but when they had sailed past

<sup>49</sup> The whole of the northern coast of America, west of Greenland, was called by the ancient Icelandic geographers *Helluland it Mikla*, or Great Helluland; and the Island of Newfoundland simply Helluland, or *Litla Helluland*. — *Beamsifh*. Helluland, ita dictam aut ob ingentes planos, qui ibi sunt, lapides [*hella*, gen. *hellu*, pl. *hellur*], aut ea ratione, quod terræ illius litora plana fuerint et dura. Reperimus apud antiquos duas terras hoc nomine insignitas, quarum una appellata est *Helluland hit mikla*, Hellulandia Major, altera *Litla Helluland*, Hellulandia Minor. — *Antiq. Amer.*, p. 419. *Vide* Tab. XVI. — *Idem*.

<sup>50</sup> Bjanney, from *Björn*, a bear, gen. *bjarnar*, and *ey*, island: hence Bjarney

contracted from Bjarnarey; but the common pronunciation of the latter is Bjadney or Bjanney. — *Antiq. Amer.*, p. 138, note c. — *Beamsifh*.

<sup>51</sup> In the visit of Thorvald, the son of Erik the Red, to Vinland, in 1002, four years before this present voyage, the keel of his ship had been broken off on a ness, where he remained some time to repair it. Was not the keel found by Karlsefne the same which had been broken off in the voyage of Thorvald? Does not the accident to the keel, and the repairs upon it at this place, furnish sufficient reason for naming it Kjalarness? Indeed it had been so named in the previous voyage. *Vide antea*, p. 38.



past Furdustrands, then set they the Scots on shore, and bade them run to the southward of the land, and explore its qualities, and come back again within three days. They had a sort of clothing which they called *kjafal*, which was so made that a hat was on the top, and it was open at the sides, and no arms to it; fastened together between the legs with buttons and clasps, but in other places it was open. They stayed away the appointed time; but when they came back, the one had in the hand a bunch of grapes, and the other, a new sown ear of wheat: these went on board the ship, and after that sailed they farther. They sailed into a frith; there lay an island before it, round which there were strong currents, therefore called they it Stream island. There were so many eider ducks on the island, that one could scarcely walk in consequence of the eggs. They called the place Stream frith.<sup>52</sup> They took their cargo from the ship, and prepared to remain there. They had with them all sorts of cattle. The country there was very beautiful. They undertook nothing but to explore the land. They were there for the winter without having provided food beforehand. In the summer the fishing declined, and they were badly off for provisions; then disappeared Thorhall the huntsman. They had previously made prayers to God for food, but it did not come so quick as they thought their necessities required. They searched after Thorhall for three days,<sup>53</sup> and found him on the top of a rock; there he lay, and

<sup>52</sup> *Straumfjord* and *Straumey*, from *straumr*, a current; *ey*, island; and *ffjord*, frith: also, *Furdustrandir*, from *furda*, gen. *furdu*, wonderful, and *strönd*, pl. *strandir*, beach. — *Beamið*.

<sup>53</sup> 3 dægr. There seems to be considerable ambiguity about the Icelandic words *dagr* and *dægr*, which are arbitrarily used to express either the natural day of 24 hours or the artificial day of

and looked up in the sky, and gaped both with nose and mouth, and murmured something; they asked him why he had gone there; he said it was no business of theirs; they bade him come home with them, and he did so. Soon after came there a whale, and they went thither, and cut it up, and no one knew what sort of whale it was; and when the cook dressed it, then ate they, and all became ill in consequence.<sup>54</sup> Then said Thorhall: "The red-bearded<sup>55</sup> was more helpful than your Christ; this have I got now for my verses that I sung of Thor, my protector; seldom has he deserted me." But when they came to know this, they cast the

of 12 hours. Throughout this and the preceding narrative, *dægr* is considered by the editor to mean the artificial day, and *dagr* the natural day, hence 2 *dægr* is rendered "a day and night" [Dan. "en Dag og en Nat," — Lat. "noctem diemque,"] — and 3 *dægr*, "three half natural days" (36 hours) [Dan. "tre halve Døgn," — Lat. "tria nychthemurium"]. But in a subsequent narrative (De Ario Mario Filii, Antiq. Amer., p. 211) we find VI. *dægr* rendered, in the Danish version, "6 Døgn," and, in the Latin, "sex diem," thus applying the word *dægr* to the natural day of 24 hours. Finn Magnúsen, also, expressly states that the artificial day was called *dagr*, and the natural day *dægr*. — See *Mém. de la Soc. Roy. des Antiq. du Nord*, 1836, 1837, p. 165. — *Beamish*.

<sup>54</sup> This whale was probably a species of the *Balæna physalis* of Linnæus, which was not edible, and, being rarely seen in the Greenland and Iceland seas, was unknown to the Northmen. A kind of whale called *Balæna mysticetus* is mentioned by Ebeling, as having been formerly found on the coasts of Rhode Island and Massachusetts, re-

visiting the more southern latitudes in winter, and returning northwards in the spring; in after times, however, they disappeared altogether from the coasts; and in the present day the number of whales in northern latitudes has much diminished. — *Idem*.

<sup>55</sup> Thor, the eldest son of Odin and Frigga, the strongest of the Aser, and next to Odin in rank.

"There sits on golden throne  
Aloft the god of war,  
Save Odin, yields to none  
'Mongst gods great Aser, Thor."  
*Oehlenschläger, Pigott's Translation.*

The introduction of Christianity being but recent in Iceland, many of the Northmen still believed in Thor, or, embracing the new religion with a wavering faith, applied to the Aser gods in cases of difficulty. "The remains of the worship of Thor lingered longer in the North than those of any of the other Scandinavian deities. In Nial's Saga, a female skald says to a Christian, 'Do you not know that Thor has challenged your Christ to single combat, and that he dares not fight him?'" — *Pigott's Scandinavian Mythology*, p. 101. — *Idem*.

the whole whale into the sea, and resigned their case to God. Then the weather improved, and it was possible to row out fishing; and they were not then in want of provisions, for wild beasts were caught on the land, and fish in the sea, and eggs collected on the island.

## OF KARLSEFNE AND THORHALL.

So is said that Thorhall would go to the northward along Furdufrands, to explore Vinland, but Karlsefne would go southwards along the coast. Thorhall got ready, out under the island, and there were no more together than nine men; but all the others went with Karlsefne. Now when Thorhall bore water to his ship, and drank, then sung he this song:—

People told me when I came  
Hither, all would be so fine;  
The good Vinland, known to fame,  
Rich in fruits, and choicest wine;  
Now the water pail they send;  
To the fountain I must bend,  
Nor from out this land divine  
Have I quaffed one drop of wine.

And when they were ready, and hoisted sail, then chaunted Thorhall:—

Let our trusty band  
Haste to Fatherland;  
Let our vessel brave  
Plough the angry wave,  
While those few who love  
Vinland, here may rove,

Or,

Or, with idle toil,  
Fetid whales may boil,  
Here on Ferdustrand,  
Far from Fatherland.<sup>56</sup>

After that, sailed they northwards past Furdustrands and Kjalarnefs, and would cruise to the westward; then came against them a strong west wind, and they were driven away to Ireland, and were there beaten, and made slaves, according to what the merchants have said.

Now is to be told about Karlsefne, that he went to the southward along the coast, and Snorri and Bjarni, with their people. They sailed a long time, and until they came to a river, which ran out from the land, and through a lake, out into the sea. It was very shallow, and one could not enter the river without high water. Karlsefne sailed, with his people, into the mouth, and they called the place Hóp.<sup>57</sup> They found there upon the land self-sown fields of wheat, there where the ground was low, but vines there where it rose somewhat. Every stream there was full of fish. They made holes there where the land commenced, and the waters rose highest; and when the tide fell, there were sacred fish<sup>58</sup> in the holes. There were a great number of all

<sup>56</sup> Omnes hæ strophæ antiquitatem et genium sapiunt seculi 10<sup>m</sup> et 11<sup>m</sup>, tam quod attinet ad metaphoras, quam ceteram indolem.—*Rasn, Antiq. Amer.*, p. 144, note a.

<sup>57</sup> I Hópi, from the Icelandic word *hópa*, to recede, and may signify here either the recess formed by the confluence of a river and the sea, or the mouth of the river, or merely the inlet of the sea into which the river falls.—*Beamish*.

<sup>58</sup> Helgir fiskar. This is supposed to have been the species of flounder or flat fish, called by the English *halibut* (*Pleuronectes hippoglossus* Linn., *Hippoglossus vulgaris* Cuv.), and which is still called in Iceland "holy fish" (*heilagfiski*), a name given, according to Pliny, in consequence of the presence of these fish being considered to denote safe water. Speaking of the danger to be apprehended from the dog-fish, he adds: "Certissima est securitas vidisse *planos*

all kinds of wild beasts in the woods. They remained there a half month, and amused themselves, and did not perceive any thing [new]: they had their cattle with them. And one morning early, when they looked round, saw they a great many canoes, and poles were swung upon them, and it sounded like the wind in a straw-stack, and the swinging was with the sun. Then said Karlsefne: "What may this denote?" Snorri Thorbrandson answered him: "It may be that this is a sign of peace, so let us take a white shield, and hold it towards them;" and so did they. Upon this the others rowed towards them, and looked with wonder upon those that they met, and went up upon the land. These people were black, and ill favored, and had coarse hair on the head; they had large eyes and broad cheeks. They remained there for a time, and gazed upon those that they met, and rowed afterwards away to the southward, round the nefs.

Karlsefne and his people had made their dwellings above the lake, and some of the houses were near the water, others more distant. Now were they there for the winter; there came no snow, and all their cattle fed themselves on the grafs. But when spring<sup>59</sup> approached, saw they one morning early that a number of canoes rowed from the south round the nefs; so many, as if the sea were sown with coal: poles were also swung on each boat. Karlsefne and his people then raised up the shield, and when they came together, they began to barter; and these people would rather

*planos pisces, quia nunquam sunt, ubi nantes sacros appellant eos.* — *Hist. Nat.*, Lib. ix. — *Beemish.*

<sup>59</sup> A.D. 1009.



rather have red cloth [than any thing else]; for this they had to offer skins and real furs. They would also purchase swords and spears, but this Karlsefne and Snorri forbade. For an entire fur skin the Skrælings took a piece of red cloth, a span long, and bound it round their heads. Thus went on their traffic for a time; then the cloth began to fall short among Karlsefne and his people, and they cut it asunder into small pieces, which were not wider than the breadth of a finger, and still the Skrælings gave just as much for that as before, and more.<sup>60</sup>

It happened that a bull, which Karlsefne had, ran out from the wood and roared aloud; this frightened the Skrælings, and they rushed to their canoes, and rowed away to the southward, round the coast: after that they were not seen for three entire weeks. But at the end of that time, a great number of Skrælings' ships were seen coming from the south like a rushing torrent; all the poles were turned from the sun, and they all howled very loud. Then took Karlsefne's people a red shield, and held it towards them. The Skrælings jumped out of their ships, and after this went they against each other, and fought. There was a sharp shower of weapons, for the Skrælings had slings. Karlsefne's people saw that they raised up on a pole an enormous large ball, something like a sheep's paunch, and of a blue color; this

<sup>60</sup> The Saga of Erik the Red, in giving an account of this transaction, adds that Karlsefne, on the cloth being expended, hit upon the expedient of making the women take out milk porridge to the Skrælings, who, as soon as they saw this new article of commerce, would buy the porridge and nothing

else. "Thus," says the Saga, "the traffic of the Skrælings was wound up by their bearing away their purchases in their stomachs, but Karlsefne and his companions retained their goods and skins." — *Antiq. Amer.*, pp. 59, 60. — *Beamish*.



this swung they from the pole over Karlsefne's men, upon the ground, and it made a frightful crash as it fell down.<sup>61</sup> This caused great alarm to Karlsefne and all his people, so that they thought of nothing but running away, and they fell back along the river, for it appeared to them that the Skrælings pressed upon them from all sides; and they did not stop until they came to some rocks, where they made a stout resistance. Freydis came out and saw that Karlsefne's people fell back, and she cried out: "Why do ye run, stout men as ye are, before these miserable wretches, whom I thought ye would knock down like cattle? and if I had weapons, methinks I could fight better than any of ye." They gave no heed to her words. Freydis would go with them, but she was slower, because she was pregnant; however she followed after them into the wood. The Skrælings pursued her; she found a dead man before her: it was Thorbrand Snorrafon, and there stood a flat stone stuck in his head; the sword lay naked by his side; this took she up, and prepared to defend herself. Then came the Skrælings towards her; she drew out her breasts from under her clothes, and dashed them against the naked sword; by this the Skrælings became frightened, and ran off to their ships, and rowed away. Karlsefne and his people then came up, and praised her courage. Two men fell on Karlsefne's side, but a number of the Skrælings. Karlsefne's band was over-  
matched

<sup>61</sup> The nature of this missile does not exactly appear, but it probably had some affinity with the harpoon used by the Esquimaux in fishing, and to which is attached a bladder, as well for the purpose of directing the weapon as of

marking its position after having been thrown. In the present instance, stones would appear to have been added to this contrivance. — *Antiq. Amer.*, p. 152, note *b*. — *Beams's*.

matched, and they now drew home to their dwellings, and bound their wounds; and they thought over what crowd that could have been, which had pressed upon them from the land side, and it now appeared to them that it could scarcely have been real people from the ships, but that these must have been optical illusions. The Skrælings found also a dead man, and an axe lay by him; one of them took up the axe, and cut wood with it, and now one after another did the same, and thought it was an excellent thing, and bit well; after that one took it, and cut at a stone, so that the axe broke, and then thought they it was of no use, because it would not cut stone, and they threw it away.

Karlsefne and his people now thought they saw, that although the land had many good qualities, still would they be always exposed there to the fear of hostilities from the earlier inhabitants. They proposed, therefore, to depart, and return to their own country. They sailed northwards along the coast, and found five Skrælings clothed in skins, sleeping near the sea. They had with them vessels containing animal marrow mixed with blood. Karlsefne's people thought they understood that these men had been banished from the land: they killed them. After that came they to a ness, and many wild beasts were there; and the ness was covered all over with dung, from the beasts which had lain there during the night. Now came they back to Straumfjord, and there was abundance of every thing that they wanted to have. It is some men's say, that Bjarni and Gudrid remained behind, and a hundred men with them, and did not go further; but that Karlsefne and Snorri went southwards, and forty men with them, and were not longer in  
Hope

Hope than barely two months, and the same summer came back.<sup>62</sup> Karlsefne went then with one ship to seek after Thorhall the hunter, but the rest remained behind, and they sailed northwards past Kjalarnefs, and thence westwards, and the land was upon their larboard hand; there were wild woods over all, as far as they could see, and scarcely any open places. And when they had long sailed, a river fell out of the land from east to west; they put in to the mouth of the river, and lay by its southern bank.

DEATH OF THORVALD, THE SON OF ERIK.

It happened one morning that Karlsefne and his people saw, opposite an open place in the wood, a speck which glistened in their sight, and they shouted out towards it, and it was a uniped,<sup>63</sup> which thereupon hurried down to the bank of the river, where they lay. Thorvald Erikson stood at the helm, and the uniped shot an arrow into his bowels. Thorvald drew out the arrow, and said: "It has killed me! — to

a

<sup>62</sup> This passage is evidently the statement of an imperfect tradition, to which the writer of the Saga gave no credit; and, although only involving a question of *time*, it must be rejected as inconsistent with the previous details: its insertion, however, is strongly characteristic of the candor and honesty of the writer, who is obviously desirous of stating all that he has heard upon the subject. — *Beamsifh.*

<sup>63</sup> Einfoetingr, from *ein*, one, and *foetr*, foot. This term appears to have been given by ancient writers to some of the Indian tribes, in consequence of the peculiarity of their dress, which

Wormskiold describes as a triangular cloth, hanging down so low, both before and behind, that the feet were concealed. In an old miscellaneous work, called "*Rimbegla*," published at Copenhagen in 1780, a people of this denomination, inhabiting Blaland in Ethiopia, are thus described: "*Einfoetingar hafa svá mikinn fót vid jord, at their skyggja sér med honum vid solarhita i svefni,*" *i.e.*, says Professor Rafn, "*Unipedes plantam pedis tam amplam habent, ut ipsis dormientibus sit umbraculi.*" — *Antiq. Amer.*, p. 158, note *a.* — *Idem.*

a fruitful land have we come, but hardly shall we enjoy any benefit from it." Thorvald soon after died of this wound.<sup>64</sup> Upon this the uniped ran away to the northward; Karlsefne and his people went after him, and saw him now and then, and the last time they saw him, he ran out into a bay. Then turned they back, and a man chaunted these verses:—

The people chafed  
A Uniped  
Down to the beach;  
But lo! he ran  
Straight o'er the sea.  
Hear thou, Thorfinn!

They drew off then, and to the northward, and thought they saw the country of the Unipeds; they would not then expose their people any longer. They looked upon the mountain range that was at Hope, and that which they now found, as all one, and it also appeared to be equal length from Straumfjord to both places. The third winter<sup>65</sup> were they in Straumfjord. They now became much divided by party feeling, and the women were the cause of it, for those who were unmarried would injure those that were married, and hence arose great disturbance. There was born the first autumn<sup>66</sup> Snorri, Karlsefne's son, and he was  
three

<sup>64</sup> Compare *antea*, p. 39. The discrepancy in the two accounts of the death of Thorvald is perhaps no more than is to be expected, when we consider the mutations to which the sagas were exposed before they were reduced to writing.

<sup>65</sup> A.D. 1009, 1010.

<sup>66</sup> Snorri was born in Vinland, A.D. 1007. From him, according to a genealogical table introduced into "*Antiquitates Americanæ*" by Professor Rafn, are lineally descended a large number of distinguished Scandinavians. Among them we note the following: Snorri Sturleson, the celebrated historian, b.

three years old when they went away. When they sailed from Vinland, they had a south wind, and came then to Markland, and found there five Skrælings, and one was bearded; two were females, and two boys; they took the boys, but the others escaped, and the Skrælings sank down in the ground. These two boys took they with them; they taught them the language, and they were baptized. They called their mother Vathelldi, and their father Uvæge. They said that two kings ruled over the Skrælings, and that one of them was called Avalldania, but the other Valldidida. They said that no houses were there; people lay in caves or in holes. They said there was a land on the other side, just opposite their country, where people lived who wore white clothes, and carried poles before them, and to these were fastened flags, and they shouted loud; and people think that this was WHITE-MAN'S-LAND, OR GREAT IRELAND.<sup>67</sup>

Bjarni Grimolfson was driven with his ship into the Irish ocean, and they came into a worm-sea,<sup>68</sup> and straightway began the ship to sink under them. They had a boat which was smeared with seal oil, for the sea-worms do not attack that:

1178; Bertel Thorvaldson, the eminent sculptor, b. 1770; Finn Magnufen, b. 1781; Birgen Thorlacius, professor in Copenhagen, b. 1775; Grim Thorkelin, professor in Copenhagen, and many others earlier in the line.

<sup>67</sup> Hvítramannaland eða Írland ed mykla.

<sup>68</sup> Madkfjó. Probably waters infested with the *Teredo navalis*, from which the ships of Columbus received such injury in a more southern latitude. "The seamen were disheartened by the

constant opposition of the winds and currents, and by the condition of the ships, which were pierced on all parts by the *teredo*, or worm." — *Irving's Columbus*, p. 287. "Continuing along the coast eastward, he was obliged to abandon one of the caravels in the harbor of Puerto Bello, being so pierced by the *teredo* that it was impossible to keep her afloat." — *Ib.*, p. 303. The *Teredo navalis*, and its destructive effects, may still be seen on the south coast of Ireland. — *Beamish*.

that: they went into the boat, and then saw that it could not hold them all; then said Bjarni: "Since the boat cannot give room to more than the half of our men, it is my counsel that lots should be drawn for those to go in the boat, for it shall not be according to rank." This thought they all so high-minded an offer, that no one would speak against it; they then did so that lots were drawn, and it fell upon Bjarni to go in the boat, and the half of the men with him, for the boat had not room for more. But when they had gotten into the boat, then said an Icelandic man, who was in the ship, and had come with Bjarni from Iceland: "Dost thou intend, Bjarni, to separate from me here?" Bjarni answered: "So it turns out." Then said the other: "Very different was thy promise to my father, when I went with thee from Iceland, than thus to abandon me, for thou said'st that we should both share the same fate." Bjarni replied: "It shall not be thus; go thou down into the boat, and I will go up into the ship, since I see that thou art so desirous to live." Then went Bjarni up into the ship, but this man down into the boat, and after that continued they their voyage, until they came to Dublin in Ireland,<sup>99</sup> and told there these things; but it is most people's belief that Bjarni and his companions were lost in the worm-sea, for nothing was heard of them since that time.

Posterity

<sup>99</sup> At this period the Northmen were still numerous in the sea-port towns of Ireland, Sitric the Dane being King of Dublin. — See *Moore*, Vol. II. p. 105. — *Beamish*.



POSTERITY OF KARLSEFNE AND THURID HIS WIFE.

THE next summer<sup>70</sup> went Karlsefne to Iceland, and Gudrid with him, and he went home to Reynisfnefs. His mother thought that he had made a bad match, and therefore was Gudrid not at home the first winter. But when she observed that Gudrid was a distinguished woman, went she home, and they agreed very well together. The daughter of Snorri Karlsefnefsen was Hallfrid, mother to Bishop Thorlak Runolfson. They had a son who was called Thorbjörn, his daughter was called Thorunn, mother to Bishop Björn. The son of Snorri Karlsefnefsen was called Thorgeir, father to Yngvild, mother of Bishop Brand the first. A daughter of Snorri Karlsefnefsen was also Steinum, who married Einar, son of Grundarketil, son of Thorvald Krok, the son of Thorer, of Espihol; their son was Thorstein Ranglatr; he was father to Gudrun, who married Jörund of Keldum; their daughter was Halla, mother to Flofe, father of Valgerde, mother of Herr Erlend Sterka, father of Herr Hauk the Lagman.<sup>71</sup> Another daughter of Flofe was Thordis, mother of Fru Ingigerd the Rich; her daughter was Fru Hallbera, Abbess of Stad at Reinisfnefs. Many other great men in Iceland are descended from Karlsefne and Thurid, who are not here mentioned. God be with us! Amen!

Voyage

<sup>70</sup> A.D. 1011. In another narrative of Karlsefne, which follows the present in the "*Antiquitates Americanæ*," as well as in the short account of these same occurrences contained in the Saga of Erik the Red, it is stated that

Karlsefne passed the winter of 1010 at Eriksfjord in Greenland. — Compare *Antiq. Amer.*, pp. 64–183. — *Beams's*.

<sup>71</sup> Hauk Erlendson the last contributor to the *Landnámabók*. — *Idem*.

## VOYAGE OF FREYDIS, HELGI, AND FINNBOGI.

A. D. 1011.

*Freydis causes the brothers to be killed.*<sup>73</sup>

Now began people again to talk about expeditions to Vinland, for voyages thereto appeared both profitable and honorable. The same summer that Karlsefne came from Vinland,<sup>73</sup> came also a ship from Norway to Greenland; this ship steered two brothers, Helgi and Finnbogi, and they remained for the winter in Greenland. These brothers were Icelanders by descent, and from Austfjord. It is now to be told that Freydis, Erik's daughter, went from her home at Garde to the brothers Helgi and Finnbogi, and bade them that they should sail to Vinland with their vessels, and go halves with her in all the profits which might be there made. To this they agreed. Then went she to Leif, her brother, and begged him to give her the houses which he had caused to be built in Vinland; but he answered the same as before, that he would lend the houses, but not give them. So was it settled between the brothers and Freydis, that each should have thirty fighting men in the ship, besides women. But Freydis broke this agreement, and had five men more, and hid them; so that the brothers knew not of it before they came to Vinland.

Now

This narrative is contained in the Saga of Erik the Red (*Antiq. Amer.*, p. 65, *seq.*), but has been transferred to this place, as well to make the chronological order of the various voyages

more perspicuous, as on account of the further particulars relating to Karlsefne and Gudrid, with which it concludes.—*Beamsifh.*

<sup>73</sup> A. D. 1010.

Now failed they into the sea, and had before arranged that they should keep together, if it could so be, and there was little difference; but still came the brothers somewhat before, and had taken up their effects to Leif's houses. But when Freydis came to land, then cleared they out their ships, and bore up their goods to the house. Then said Freydis: "Why bring ye in your things here?" "Because we believed," said they, "that the whole agreement should stand good between us." "To me lent Leif the houses," quoth she, "and not to you." Then said Helgi: "In malice are we brothers easily excelled by thee." Now took they out their goods, and made a separate building, and set that building further from the strand, on the edge of a lake, and put all around in good order; but Freydis had trees cut down for her ship's loading. Now began winter, and the brothers proposed to set up sports, and have some amusement. So was done for a time, until evil reports and discord sprung up amongst them, and there was an end of the sports; and nobody came from the one house to the other, and so it went on for a long time during the winter. It happened one morning early that Freydis got up from her bed, and dressed herself, but took no shoes or stockings; and the weather was such that much dew had fallen. She took her husband's cloak, and put it on, and then went to the brothers' house, and to the door; but a man had gone out a little before, and left the door half open. She opened the door, and stood a little time in the opening, and was silent; but Finnbogi lay inside the house, and was awake. He said: "What wilt thou here, Freydis?" She said: "I wish that thou wouldest get up, and go out with me, for I will

will speak with thee." He did so. They went to a tree, that lay near the dwellings, and sat down there. "How art thou satisfied here?" said she. He answered: "Well think I of the land's fruitfulness, but ill do I think of the discord that has sprung up betwixt us, for it appears to me that no cause has been given." "Thou sayest as it is," said she, "and so think I; but my business here with thee is that I wish to change ships with thy brother, for ye have a larger ship than I, and it is my wish to go from hence." "That must I agree to," said he, "if such is thy wish." Now with that they separated. She went home, and Finnbogi to his bed. She got into the bed with cold feet, and thereby woke Thorvard, and he asked why she was so cold and wet. She answered, with much vehemence: "I was gone," said she, "to the brothers, to make a bargain with them about their ship, for I wished to buy the large ship; but they took it so ill, that they beat me, and used me shamefully; but thou! miserable man! wilt surely neither avenge my disgrace or thine own, and it is easy to see that I am no longer in Greenland, and I will separate from thee if thou avengest not this." And now could he no longer withstand her reproaches, and bade his men to get up with all speed, and take their arms; and so did they, and went straightway to the brothers' house, and went in, and fell upon them sleeping, and then took and bound them, and thus led out one after the other; but Freydis had each of them killed, as he came out. Now were all the men there killed, and only women remained, and them would no one kill. Then said Freydis: "Give me an axe!" So was done; upon which she killed the five women that were there, and did not stop until they  
were

were all dead. Now they went back to their house after this evil work, and Freydis did not appear otherwise than as if she had done well, and spoke thus to her people: "If it be permitted us to come again to Greenland," said she, "I will take the life of that man who tells of this business; now should we say this, that they remained behind when we went away." Now early in the spring made they ready the ship that had belonged to the brothers, and loaded it with all the best things they could get, and the ship could carry. After that they put to sea, and had a quick voyage, and came to Eriksfjord with the ship early in the summer. Now Karlsefne was there, and had his ship quite ready for sea, and waited for a fair wind; and it is generally said, that no richer ship has ever gone from Greenland than that which he steered.

## OF FREYDIS.

FREYDIS repaired now to her dwelling, which, in the mean time, had stood uninjured; she gave great gifts to all her companions, that they should conceal her misdeeds, and sat down now in her house. All were not, however, so mindful of their promises to conceal their crimes and wickedness but that it came out at last. Now finally it reached the ears of Leif, her brother, and he thought very ill of the business. Then took Leif three men of Freydis's band, and tortured them to confess the whole occurrence, and all their statements agreed. "I like not," said Leif, "to do that to Freydis, my sister, which she has deserved; but

but this will I predict, — that thy posterity will never thrive." Now the consequence was, that no one, from that time forth, thought otherwise than ill of them.

Now must we begin from the time when Karlsefne got ready his ship, and put to sea. He had a prosperous voyage, and came safe and sound to Norway, and remained there for the winter, and sold his goods, and both he and his wife were held in great honor by the most respectable men in Norway. But the spring after, fitted he out his ship for Iceland; and when he was all ready, and his ship lay at the bridge, waiting for a fair wind, then came there a southern to him, who was from Bremen in Saxony, and wanted to buy from Karlsefne his house broom.<sup>74</sup> "I will not sell it," said he. "I will give thee a half mark gold for it," said the German. Karlsefne thought this was a good offer, and they closed the bargain. The southern went off with the house broom, but Karlsefne knew not what wood it was; but that was maufur,<sup>75</sup> brought from Vinland. Now Karlsefne put to sea, and came with his ship to Skagafjord, on the northern coast, and there was the ship laid up for the winter. But in spring

<sup>74</sup> Húsafnotru. Some doubts have arisen as to the meaning of this word, which Finn Magnúsen thinks is here intended to express a vane or weathercock, such appendages having been formerly ornamented by the Northmen, at great cost, and placed on the top of the house. The price given (about £16 sterling) is also more accordant with this interpretation. Torfæus calls it "coronis domus," which seems to imply some ornamental appendage of the kind: the editor (Professor Rafn) has followed the Lexicon of Björn

Haldorson. — See *Antiq. Amer.*, p. 441, note c, and *Lexicon Islandico-Latino-Danicum* Björnsonis Haldorsonii ex manuscriptis Legati Arna Magnæani cura, R. K. Raskii editum. Hafniæ, 1814, 4to. — *Beamish*.

<sup>75</sup> Mr. Beamish suggests that this may be the bird's eye or curled maple, and says that the old German name of maple, *maasholderbaum*, and the Swedish, *masur*, speckled wood, and *masurerad*, applied to knotty, or marble-like wood, tend to confirm this supposition.

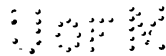


spring bought he Glaumbæland, and fixed his dwelling there, and lived there, and was a highly respected man, and from him and Gudrid his wife has sprung a numerous and distinguished race. And when Karlsefne was dead, took Gudrid the management of the house with her son Snorri, who was born in Vinland. But when Snorri was married, then went Gudrid abroad, and travelled southwards, and came back again to the house of Snorri her son, and then had he caused a church to be built at Glaumbæ. After this became Gudrid a nun and recluse, and remained so whilst she lived. Snorri had a son who was named Thorgeir; he was father to Ingveld, mother of Bishop Brand. The daughter of Snorri Karlsefne's son was called Hallfrid; she was mother to Runolf, father to Bishop Thorlak.<sup>76</sup> Björn was a son of Karlsefne and Gudrid; he was father to Thorunn, mother of Bishop Björn. A numerous race are descended from Karlsefne, and distinguished men; and Karlsefne has accurately related to all men the occurrences on all these voyages, of which somewhat is now recited here.<sup>77</sup>

#### Geographical

<sup>76</sup> "To the learned Bishop Thorlak Runolfson we are principally indebted for the oldest ecclesiastical code of Iceland, published in the year 1123; and it is also probable that the accounts of these voyages were originally compiled by him." — *Vide Synopsis of Historical Evidence in this Volume*, by Professor Rafn.

<sup>77</sup> It would appear that Karlsefne himself narrated originally the events that occurred on these voyages, and that only the more important portions were written out by the sagaman; that it was not written till a numerous race of distinguished men had descended from Karlsefne. — *Vide Genealogical Table in Appendix to Antiq. Amer.*



## GEOGRAPHICAL NOTICES.

FRAGMENTUM GEOGRAPHICUM.<sup>78</sup>

NEXT to Denmark is the lesser Sweden, then is Æland, then Gottland, then Helsingeland, then Vermeland, and the two Kvendlands, which lie to the north of Bjarmeland. From Bjarmeland stretches uninhabited land towards the north, until Greenland begins. South of Greenland is Helluland; next lies Markland; thence it is not far to Vinland the Good, which some think goes out from Africa; and if it be so, the sea must run in between Vinland and Markland. It is related that Thorfinn Karlsefne cut wood here to ornament his house,<sup>79</sup> and went afterwards to seek out Vinland the Good, and came there, where they thought the land was, but did not effect the knowledge of it, and gained none of the riches of the land. Leif the Lucky first discovered Vinland, and then he met some merchants in distress at sea, and, by God's mercy, saved their lives; and he introduced Christianity into Greenland, and it spread itself there, so that a Bishop's seat was established in the place called Gardar. England and Scotland are an island, and yet each is a kingdom for itself. Ireland is a great island. Iceland is also a great island north of Ireland. These countries are all in that part of the world which is called Europe.

Gripla

<sup>78</sup> This is a fragment from Vellum Codex, No. 192, supposed by Professor Rafn to have been written near the end of the fourteenth century. — *Vide Antiq. Amer.*, p. 279.

<sup>79</sup> *Vide antea*, note 74.

GRIPLA.<sup>80</sup>

*Codex, No. 115, 8vo, Antiq. Amer., p. 293.*

BAVARIA is bounded by Saxony; Saxony is bounded by Holstein, then comes Denmark; the sea flows through the eastern countries. Sweden lies to the east of Denmark, Norway to the north; Finmark north of Norway; thence stretches the land out to the north-east and east, until you come to Bjarmeland; this land is tributary to Gardarige. From Bjarmeland lie uninhabited places all northward to that land which is called Greenland [which, however, the Greenlanders do not confirm, but believe to have observed that it is otherwise, both from drift timber, which it is known is cut down by men, and also from reindeer, which have marks upon the ears, or bands upon the horns, likewise from sheep which stray thither, of which there now are remains in Norway, for one head hangs in Thronthjem, another in Bergen, and many more besides are to be found].<sup>81</sup> But there are bays, and the land stretches out toward the south-west; there are jökels and fjords; there lie islands out before the jökels; one of the jökels cannot be explored; to the other is half a month's sail, to the third a week's sail; this is nearest to the settlement called Hvidferk; thence stretches the land toward the north; but he who wishes not to

<sup>80</sup> This remarkable geographical fragment is contained in the celebrated Greenlandic collection of Björn Johnson, and was evidently written before the time of Columbus. The name is supposed to be derived from the word *gripa*, to snatch, the collection

being of a miscellaneous character.—*Antiq. Amer.*, pp. 280, 281.—*Bea-mish*.

<sup>81</sup> This passage is considered by Professor Rafn to be an interpolation.—*Antiq. Amer.*, p. 294, note *a*.

to miss the settlement fleers to the south-west. The Bishop's seat at the bottom of Eriksfjord is called Gardar; there is a church dedicated to the holy Nicholas; twelve churches are upon Greenland in the eastern settlement, four in the western.

Now is to be told what lies opposite Greenland, out from the bay, which was before named: a land called Furdustrandir; there are so strong frosts that it is not habitable, so far as one knows; south from thence is Helluland, which is called Skrælingsland; from thence it is not far to Vinland the Good, which some think goes out from Africa; between Vinland and Greenland is Ginnungagap, which flows from the sea called Mare Oceanum, and surrounds the whole earth. *Hæc verbotenus Gripla.*



### MINOR NARRATIVES.

FROM THE HISTORY OF KING OLAF TRYGGVASON.

*According to the Second Vellum Codex, No. 61, Fol.*

*Supposed to have been copied at the end of the fourteenth or beginning of the fifteenth Century. Antiq. Amer., p. 202.*

THUS says the holy priest Bede, in the chronicles which he wrote concerning the regions of the earth: that the island

MINOR NARRATIVES. — These brief relations are extracts and narratives from Icelandic manuscripts now deposited in the libraries of Copenhagen. They contain traces of Irish settlements in Iceland anterior to its occupation by the Norwegians, and of voyages to a part of America which is spoken of as Great Ireland. The description of the coast visited is so slight and hazy, that it

island which is called Thule in the books lies so far in the north part of the world, that there came no day in the winter, when the night is longest, and no night in summer, when the day is longest. Therefore think learned men that it is Iceland which is called Thule,<sup>82</sup> for there are many places in that land where the sun sets not at night, when the day is longest, and in the same manner where the sun cannot be seen by day, when the night is longest. But the holy priest Bede died 735 years after the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, more than a hundred and twenty years before Iceland was inhabited by the Northmen. But, before Iceland was colonized from Norway, men had been there whom the Northmen called Papas.<sup>83</sup> They were Christians; for after them were found Irish books, bells, and croziers, and many other things, from whence it could be seen that they were

it cannot be identified with any degree of certainty. They strengthen the evidence that Icelandic voyages to our coasts were made at that early period; but beyond this fact add very little to what we have already learned from the sagas in the preceding pages, or that can be of any historical value or importance.

<sup>82</sup> The locality of Thule is still a *vexata quæstio* with antiquaries, the south coast of Norway and north and north-west coast of Scotland having been each assigned for its position, as well as Iceland. Bede speaks of Thule according to the relation of Pytheas of Marfeilles, Solinus, and Pliny, but makes it only six days' sail from Britain, which ill accords with the then state of navigation and nautical knowledge. Saxo would seem to refer Thule to the district of Tellemark on the south coast of Norway; for, in enu-

merating the warriors at the battle of Braavalle, he speaks of those from *Thyle*, which name is still to be found in that district. Again, the particulars given of Thule by the Irish monk, Dicuil, who wrote in the year 825, identify it with Iceland; and it seems probable that different parts of the North received the name, which, in the Icelandic language, signifies end,—extreme boundary (*tili*) according as discovery was extended.—*Beamish*.

<sup>83</sup> Papa. The clerical order were called Papas by some Latin writers (see *Du Fresne's Glossary ad script. mediæ et infimæ Latinitatis*), and thus the Northmen may have adopted the word from southern nations, "timidus prægustus pocula Papas" (*Juv. Sat. iv.*). Du Fresne shows also that the term was applied to Pædagogus.—*Idem*.



were Christian men, and had come from the west over the sea.<sup>84</sup> English books<sup>85</sup> also show that, in that time, there was intercourse between the two countries.

*From the Schedæ of Ari Frode, No. 54, Fol.*

At that time was Iceland covered with woods, between the mountains and the shore. Then were here Christian people,

<sup>84</sup> Til vestan um haf. Ireland lying to the west of Norway, from whence the Icelanders had emigrated, was generally spoken of by them with reference to their fatherland, and for the same reason they called the Irish "west-men." According to a learned enquirer into the origin of the Irish, the literal meaning of the word "Ireland" is *Westland*, the Celtic syllable *iar*, or *er*, meaning the *west*. This, however, is disputed by O'Brien, who maintains that the original interpretation of *iar* is "after," or "behind," and considers Eirin to be compounded of *i* and *erin*, the genitive of *ere*, iron, signifying the island of iron or mines, for which Ireland had formerly been famed, and hence ranked by ancient writers among the Cassiterides. — See *Wood's Inquiry concerning the Primitive Inhabitants of Ireland*, p. 1; *O'Brien's Irish Dict. in voce Eirin*. — *Beamish*.

<sup>85</sup> The strongest testimony on this point is given by Dicuil, in a work entitled "*De Mensura Orbis Terræ*," wherein he shows that Iceland had been visited by Irish ecclesiastics in 795, and the Faroe Islands in 725. — See *Antiq. Amer.*, p. 204, note a.

The particulars given of Thule by the Irish monk, Dicuil, who wrote in the year 825, offer a remarkable confirmation of the Icelandic manuscripts respecting the residence of the Irish

ecclesiastics in that region, which, in his work, is evidently identified with Iceland. He speaks of Thule as an uninhabited island, which, however, in his lifetime, about the year 795, had been visited by some monks, *with whom he himself had spoken*, and who had once dwelt upon the island from the first of February to the first of August. They denied the exaggerated statements that had been made by ancient writers respecting the perpetual ice, continued day from the vernal to the autumnal equinox, and corresponding interval of night, but stated that a day's journey further northward the sea was really frozen, and that with respect to the length of the days and nights at, and a few days before and after, the summer solstice, the sun sank so little below the horizon during the night, that one could pursue their ordinary occupations as well as by daylight. The author further describes several islands lying in the north part of the British ocean, which, with a fair wind, might be reached from the north of Britain in two days and a night; and states that here, *nearly a hundred years before*, namely A.D. 725, hermits from Ireland had taken up their abode, but, disturbed by the roving Northmen, had since departed, leaving the place uninhabited. These islands are further described as having upon them

people, whom the Northmen called Papas; but they went afterwards away, because they would not be here amongst heathens, and left after them Irish books, and bells, and croziers, from which could be seen that they were Irishmen. But then began people to travel much here out from Norway, until King Harold forbade it, because it appeared to him that the land had begun to be thinned of inhabitants.

*From the Prologue to the Landnámabók, No. 53, Fol.*

BUT before Iceland was colonized by the Northmen, the men were there whom the Northmen called Papas: they were Christians, and people think that they came from the west over the sea, for there were found after them Irish books, and bells, and croziers, and many more things, from which it could be seen that they were Westmen; such were found eastwards in Papey and Papýli: it is also mentioned in English books that, in that time, was intercourse between the countries.

#### CONCERNING ARI MARSON.

A. D. 982.

*From the Landnámabók, No. 107, Fol., collated with accounts of the same transactions in Hauksbók, No. 105, Fol., Melabók, No. 106 and 112, Fol., and other MSS. in the Arnæ-Magnæan collection.*

ULF the Squinter, son of Höгна the White, took all Reykjanes, between Thorkafjord and Hafrafell; he married Björg,

them a great number of sheep, which name of which is known to be derived from the original Icelandic term, *Fareyjar*, or sheep islands. — *Beamtish.*

Björg, daughter to Eyvind the Eastman, sister to Helge the Lean; their son was Atli the Red, who married Thorbjörg, sister to Steinólf the Humble; their son was Mar of Hólum, who married Thorkatla, daughter of Hergil Neprafs; their son was Ari;<sup>86</sup> he was driven by a tempest to White Man's Land, which some call GREAT IRELAND; it lies to the west in the sea, near to Vinland the Good, and six days' sailing west from Ireland.<sup>87</sup> From thence could Ari not get away, and was there baptized. This story first told Rafn the Limerick merchant,<sup>88</sup> who had long lived at Limerick in Ireland.

<sup>86</sup> Ari Marson is mentioned in the *Kristni Saga*, c. 1, p. 6, amongst the principal chiefs in Iceland in the year 981, at which time Bishop Fridrick and Thorvald Kodranson came there to promulgate Christianity. He and his kinsmen are highly lauded in several Icelandic historical works (*Söguþættir Íslendinga*, Holum, 1756, 4, p. 105; *Fósthæðra Saga*, c. 1, p. 6). His father, Mar, and mother, Katla, figure in an ancient poem, which is still preserved among the common traditions of the Icelanders, under the name of *Kötludraumr*, or Katla's dream, and may be seen in the *Arnæ-Magnæan* collection, No. 154, 8vo. — *Antiq. Amer.*, p. 210, note a. — *Beamish*.

<sup>87</sup> "VI. dægra figling vestr frá Írlandi." Professor Rafn is of opinion that the figures VI. have arisen through mistake or carelessness of the transcriber of the original manuscript which is now lost, and were erroneously inserted instead of XX., XI., or perhaps XV., which would better correspond with the distance: this mistake might have easily arisen from a blot or defect in that part of the original MSS. — *Antiq. Amer.*, p. 447. — *Idem*.

It might also have arisen through

the carelessness of some sagaman while it remained in oral tradition. — See *antea*, p. 60, note 64.

<sup>88</sup> Hlymreksfari, a surname evidently given here to Rafn, in consequence of his trading to Limerick, with which, as well as the other principal Irish seaports, the Northmen, called by the Irish *Danes*, were accustomed to hold frequent communication from the end of the eighth century. Dublin, Waterford, and Limerick are called in the Icelandic, or old northern tongue, *Dýflin*, *Væðrafjörðr*, and *Hlimrek*, which has probably led Cambrensis and others to attribute the foundation of these cities to the Northmen, Amelanus, Sitarcus, and Ivarus, or Anlaf, Sitric, and Ivar, in the year 864, when they made a hostile expedition to the country, and settled in these three towns respectively; but O'Halloran shows that Dublin, Waterford, and Limerick were cities of note long before that period, and that the trade of Dublin, in particular, was so great at the close of the second century that a bloody war broke out between the monarch Con and the King of Munster, to determine to whom the duties upon exports and imports should belong. — *Hist. Ireland*, Vol. III. p. 178.

Ireland.<sup>89</sup> Thus said [also] Thorkell Gellerfon,<sup>90</sup> that Icelanders

p. 178. Moore, however, gives Sitric the credit of founding Waterford [II. p. 37], although its original Irish name of *Port Lairge* would seem to imply a place of some commercial importance before the adoption of its northern title, from which the name of Waterford is evidently derived [Vædrasford, the fordable frith]. Limerick, O'Halloran tells us, was so noted for its commerce from the earliest times, that it is never mentioned by ancient Irish writers without the epithet *Long*, a ship; and we find Ceallachan Caifil, king of Munster, calling it Luimneach na Luingas, or Limerick of the ships.—*Hist. Ireland*, I. p. 159, and III. p. 178. According to Archbishop Usher, the first invasion of the Danes, or Northmen, took place about the year 797, when the Annals of Ulster notice a descent on the isle of Rechrin, or Raghlin, north of the county Antrim; and their incursions continued, with little intermission, until their final defeat by Brien Boirumhe, or Boru, in the celebrated battle of Clontarff, April 23, 1014. The intervals of peace were naturally applied to commercial intercourse between the two nations; and the Northmen became established not only at the principal sea-ports, but in the interior of the country. Hence we find Irish names of persons in Iceland, and names of places formed of Northern elements in Ireland: the Icelandic Niel or Njáll is evidently the Irish Neil; Kjallach, Ceallach; Kjaran, Kieran; Bjarni, Barny, &c. Names of places are of a mixed origin: to the Irish Laighean, Munhain, Ulladh, the Northmen added their *staðr* (place), which afterwards became *ster*, and thus arose Leinster, Munster, Ulster, &c. (See *De Ældste, toge fra Norden til Irland* of N. M. Petersen,

*ap. Annaler for Nordiske Oldkyndighed*, 1836, pp. 2, 3.) The general name of Danes could hardly have arisen from the invaders being considered Danish, as they were a mixed race of Danes, Norwegians, Swedes, Saxons, Frisians, and other Gothic tribes from the Cimbric peninsula and shores of the Baltic, and were distinguished by the Irish according to the color of their hair or complexion, as *Fionne Gail*, the white strangers, and *Dubh Gail*, the black strangers (hence, probably, Fingal and Donegal). The term Dane, which was sometimes applied, is, therefore, more likely to have been expressive of the character than the country of the invaders, and to be derived from the Irish words *Dana*, bold, impetuous, and *Fear*, man: hence *Dan-ou*, the impetuous river, as the Danube is called in ancient Celtic.—See *O'Halloran*, Vol. III. p. 149, and *O'Brien's Irish Dict. in voce Dana*.—*Beamish*.

<sup>89</sup> The pedigree of Rafn, the Limerick merchant, or Oddfon, is given in the *Landnámabók*, II. 21, p. 98, from which it appears that he was descended from Duke Rolf of Norway, and on the maternal side from Steinólf the Humble, being thus connected as well with Ari Marfon as Leif Erikfon, and lived about the middle or beginning of the eleventh century. In the *Sturlunga Saga*, I. c. 3, he is named amongst the ancestors of Skard-Snorri, from whom the most distinguished Icelanders trace their descent, and it is probable was the same individual known sometimes by the name of Rafn the Red [*Rafn hinn raudi*], who accompanied Sigurd, king of the Orkneys, to Ireland in 1014, and was present at the battle of Clontarff, April 23, of the same year.—*Antiq. Amer.*, p. 211, note a.—*Idem*.

<sup>90</sup> Thorkell Gellerfon was great grandson



landers had stated, who had heard Thorfinn Jarl of the Orkneys relate that Ari was recognized in White Man's Land, and could not get away from thence, but was there much respected. Ari married Thorgerd, daughter to Alf of Dölum, whose sons were Thorgils, Gudleif, and Illugi: this is the family of Reykjanefs. A son of Ulf the Squinter was called Jörund; he married Thorbjörg Knarrarbringa; their daughter was Thjödthild, who married Erik the Red; their son [was] Leif the Lucky of Greenland. The son of Atli the Red was called Jörund; he married Thordis, daughter of Thorgeir Suda; their daughter was Otkatla, who married Thorgill Kollson. Jörund was also father to Snorri.

## FRAGMENTUM GEOGRAPHICUM.

*From the Manuscript Codex, 770, Antiq. Amer., p. 214.*

Now are there, as is said, south from Greenland, which is inhabited, deserts, uninhabited places, and icebergs, then the Skrælings, then Markland, then Vinland the Good; next, and somewhat behind, lies Albania, which is White Man's Land; thither was sailing, formerly, from Ireland; there Irishmen and Icelanders recognized Ari the son of Mar and Katla of Reykjanefs, of whom nothing had been heard

grandson of Ari Marson, and uncle to Ari Frode, the writer of this narrative. He resided at Helgafell in Iceland, and was well known as a wealthy, honorable, and brave yeoman, who, desirous of knowledge, had travelled much in his youth. He related many

things to his kinsman, Ari Frode, who appears to have had the fullest confidence in his statements, and often gives his express words, together with his name, as a security for the truth of the narrative. — *Antiq. Amer.*, p. 212, note a. — *Beamish*.

heard for a long time, and who had been made a chief there by the inhabitants.

VOYAGE OF BJÖRN ASBRANDSON.<sup>91</sup>

A. D. 999.

BÖRK the Fat, and Thordis, Sur's daughter, had a daughter that was called Thurid, and she was married to Thorbjörn the Fat, who lived at Froda; he was son of Orm the Lean, who had taken and cultivated the farm of Froda. Thurid, daughter of Afbrand of Kamb in Breidavik, had he formerly married; she was sister to Björn Breidvikingakappa, who is hereafter mentioned in the Saga, and to Arnbjörn the Strong; her sons by Thorbjörn were Ketill the Champion, Gunnlaug, and Hallstein. . . .

Now shall something be told about Snorri Godi,<sup>92</sup> that he took up the process about the murder of Thorbjörn his brother-in-law.

<sup>91</sup> This remarkable narrative is taken from the Eyrbyggja Saga, or early annals of that district of Iceland lying around the promontory of Snæfells on the western coast. It is clearly shown by Bishop Müller to have been written not later than the beginning of the thirteenth century. — *Beamish*. Vide Bishop Müller's account of this Saga, *in extenso*, in *Beamish's Northmen*, pp. 200-202.

<sup>92</sup> *Godi*, priest of the temple and prefect of the province, from *God* the Deity, being supposed to hold the office by divine appointment. Snorri Godi occupies a conspicuous place in Icelandic history from the end of the tenth to the beginning of the eleventh century. His

real name was Thorgrim Thorgrimson; but, being rather unmanageable when a child, he obtained the cognomen of Snerrir, from the Icelandic word, *snerrinn*, pugnacious, which afterwards became Snorri. — *Müller, Sag. Bib.*, V. 1. He was born in 964, and died in 1031; and hence it follows that the events recorded in this and the following narrative, where he is mentioned as an active participator, must have occurred previous to the year 1030. Various orthography has been followed by English writers with regard to the name, some calling it Snorro and others Snorre, but the final *i* seems to accord more with the Icelandic root. — *Idem*.



brother-in-law. He also took his sister home to Helgafell, because there was a report that Björn, son of Asbrand from Kamb, began to come there to inveigle her. . . .

There was a man from Medallfellstrand called Thorodd; an honorable man; he was a great merchant, and owned a trading ship. Thorodd had made a trading voyage westwards to Ireland,<sup>93</sup> to Dublin. At that time had Jarl Sigurd Lödverfson, of the Orkneys,<sup>94</sup> sway to the Hebrides, and all the way westward to Man: he imposed a tribute on the inhabitants of Man, and, when they had made peace, the Jarl left men behind him to collect the tribute; it was mostly paid in smelted silver; but the Jarl sailed away northwards to the Orkneys. But when they who had waited for the tribute were ready for sailing, they put to sea with a south-west wind; but when they had sailed for a time the wind changed to the south-east and east, and there arose a great storm, and drove them northwards under Ireland, and the ship broke there asunder upon an uninhabited island. And when they had gotten there, came, by chance, the Icelfander Thorodd, on a voyage from Dublin. The Jarl's men called out to the merchantmen to help them. Thorodd put out a boat, and went into it himself, and, when it came up, the Jarl's men begged Thorodd to help

<sup>93</sup> Kaupferd vestr til Írlands. Here we see the nature of the voyage distinctly stated, and Ireland spoken of as lying *westwards* from Iceland, which evidently arose from its position with regard to Norway, the fatherland of the settlers; hence, also, Vestmannaeyjar (Westman's Islands), on the south coast of Iceland, where some Irish captives took refuge after the murder of

their northern task-master. — See *Petersen in Annal. for Nord. Oldk.* 2836. Comp. note 84. — *Beamsifh.*

<sup>94</sup> The Orkneys are called in northern language *Órkneyjar*, from *Orka*, a kind of seal, which is described in "Speculum Regale," pp. 176, 177. Sigurd fell in battle in Ireland, 1013. — *Antiq. Amer.*, p. 218, note *b.* — *Idem.*

help them, and offered him money to take them home to Sigurd Jarl in the Orkneys; but Thorodd thought he could not do that, because he was bound for Iceland; but they pressed him hard, for they thought it concerned their goods and freedom, that they should not be left in Ireland or the Hebrides, where they before had waged war, and it ended so that he sold them the ship's boat, and took therefore a great part of the tribute; they steered then with the boat to the Orkneys; but Thorodd failed without the boat to Iceland, and came to the south of the land; then steered he westwards, and failed into Breidafjord, and landed, with all on board, at Dögurðarnefs, and went in autumn to winter with Snorri Godi at Helgafell; he was since then called Thorodd the Tribute-buyer. This happened a little after the murder of Thorbjörn the Fat. The same winter was at Helgafell Thurid the sister of Snorri Godi, whom Thorbjörn the Fat had married. Thorodd asked Snorri Godi to give him Thurid his sister in marriage; and because he was rich, and Snorri knew him from a good side, and saw that she required some one to manage her affairs,—with all this together resolved Snorri Godi to give him the woman, and their marriage was held there in the winter at Helgafell. But in the following spring Thorodd betook himself to Froda, and became a good and upright yeoman. But so soon as Thurid came to Froda, began Björn Asbrandson to visit there, and there was spread a general report that he and Thurid had unlawful intercourse; then began Thorodd to complain about his visits, but did not object to them seriously. At that time dwelled Thorer Vidlegg at Arnarhvol, and his sons, Orn and Val, were grown up, and very promising

ising men; they reproached Thorodd for submitting to such disgrace as Björn put upon him, and offered Thorodd their assistance, if he would forbid the visits of Björn. It happened one time that Björn came to Froda, and he sat talking with Thurid. Thorodd used always to sit within when Björn was there, but now was he nowhere to be seen. Then said Thurid: "Take care of thy walks, Björn, for I suspect that Thorodd thinks to put an end to thy visits here; and it looks to me as if they had gone out to fall upon thee by the way, and he thinks they will not be met by equal force." "That can well be," said Björn, and chaunted this stave: —

O Goddess of the arm-ring gold,  
 Let this bright day the longest hold  
 On earth; for now I linger here  
 In my love's arms, but soon must fear  
 These joys will vanish, and her breath  
 Be raised to mourn my early death.

Thereafter took Björn his arms, and went away, intending to go home; but when he had gotten up the Digramula, sprang five men upon him; this was Thorodd and two of his servants, and the sons of Thorer Vidlegg. They seized Björn, but he defended himself well and manfully; Thorer's sons pressed in hardest upon him, and wounded him, but he was the death of both of them. After that Thorodd went away with his men, and was a little wounded, but they not. Björn went his way until he came home, and went into the room; the woman of the house<sup>86</sup> told a maid servant to attend him;

<sup>86</sup> Húsfreyja; *Dan.*, Hausfru; *Swed.*, Husfru; *Ger.*, Hausfrau: literally, the woman or lady of the house, and meaning, in this case, Björn's mother.—*Beamish.*

him; and when she came into the room with a light, then saw she that Björn was very bloody; she went then in, and told his father Asbrand that Björn was come home bloody; Asbrand went into the room, and asked why Björn was bloody; "or have you, perhaps, fallen in with Thorodd?" Björn answered that so it was. Asbrand then asked how the business had ended. Björn chaunted:—

Easier far it is to fondle,  
In the arms of female fair  
(Vidlegg's sons I both have slain),  
Than with valiant men to wrestle,  
Or tamely purchased tribute<sup>98</sup> bear.

Then bound Asbrand his wounds, and he became quite restored. Thorodd begged Snorri Godi to manage the matter about Thorer's sons' murder, and Snorri had it brought before the court of Thorfnæs; but the sons of Thorlak of Eyra assisted Breidvikinga in this affair, and the upshot was that Asbrand went security for his son Björn, and undertook to pay a fine for the murder. But Björn was banished for three years, and went away the same summer. During the same summer Thurid of Froda was delivered of a male child, which received the name of Kjartan; he grew up at Froda, and was soon large and promising.

Now when Björn had crossed the sea [to Norway], he bent his way southwards to Denmark, and therefrom south to

<sup>98</sup> In allusion to Thorodd's transaction with the crew of Sigurd.—See *Beamsifh.* the surname of "Tribute-buyer." — *antea*, p. 81, from which he obtained

to Jomsborg.<sup>97</sup> Then was Palnatoki chief of the Jomsvikings. Björn joined their band, and was named Champion.<sup>98</sup> He was in Jomsborg when Styrbjörn the Strong took the castle. Björn was also with them in Sweden, when the Jomsvikings aided Styrbjörn; he was also in the battle of Fyrisvall, where Styrbjörn fell, and escaped in the wood with other Jomsvikings. And so long as Palnatoki lived,<sup>99</sup> was Björn with him, and was looked upon as a distinguished man, and very brave in all times of trial.

. . . The same summer<sup>100</sup> came the brothers Björn and Arnbjörn out to Iceland to Raunhafnarfos. Björn was afterwards called the Champion of Breidavik. Arnbjörn had brought much money out with him, and immediately, the

<sup>97</sup> Jomsborg (or Jom's castle), called also Julin, was built by the Danish King Harold Blaatand, on one of the mouths of the Oder, on the coast of Pomerania. It was afterwards governed by Palnatoki, a powerful chief of Fionia (Fynen), to whom Burislaus, king of the Wends, fearing his power, gave the neighboring territory, on condition that he would defend the monarch's kingdom from foreign aggression. Palnatoki accepted the conditions, and became chief of a community of pirates called *Jomsvikingr*, who were distinguished, even in those days of brutal valor, for extraordinary personal bravery and contempt of death. He established the strictest laws, and exacted the most rigid tests from those who fought to enter the society: the rank of *Kappi*, or champion, given to Björn Afbrandson, was, therefore, the strongest evidence of his eminent qualities as a warrior. — *Antiq. Amer.*, p. 227, note a. — *Jomsvikinga Saga*; and for the particular locality of Jomsborg,

which is supposed to be the present Wollin, see *De Danskes Toge, til Venden of N. M. Petersen, ap. Annaler for Nordiske Oldkyndighed*, Kjöbenhavn, 1837, pp. 235–238. — *Beamsish*.

<sup>98</sup> Styrbjörn was the son of Olaf, who reigned in Sweden jointly with Erik the Victorious, but, in consequence of aspiring to the throne and the murder of a courtier named Aki, fell into disgrace, and retired, with sixty ships given him by Erik, to Jomsborg, of which he became governor. Afterwards he made an expedition to Sweden, in conjunction with Harald Gormson, and fell in battle against the king, his uncle, in the plain of Fyrisvold near Upsala, A.D. 984. — See *Antiq. Amer.*, p. 227, note. — *Fornmanna Sögur*, Vol. V., — *Patir Styrbjarnar Svía kappi in Cod. Flat.*; and *Jomsvikinga Saga*, Müller, Vol. 3. — *Idem*.

<sup>99</sup> Palnatoki died A.D. 993. — *Idem*.

<sup>100</sup> About the year 996. — *Antiq. Amer.*, p. 228, note a.

the same summer that he came, bought land at Bakke in Raunhöfn. Arnbjörn made no display, and spoke little on most occasions, but was however, in all respects, a very able man. Björn, his brother, was, on the other hand, very pompous, when he came to the country, and lived in great style, for he had accustomed himself to the court usages of foreign chiefs; he was much handsomer than Arnbjörn, and in no particular less able, but was much more skilled in martial exercises, of which he had given proofs in foreign lands. In the summer, just after they had arrived, a great meeting of the people was held north of the heath, under Haugabret, near the mouth of the Froda; and thither rode all the merchants, in colored garments;<sup>101</sup> and when they had come to the meeting, was there many people assembled. There was Thurid, the lady of Froda, and Björn went up, and spoke to her, and no one objected to this, for it was thought likely that their discourse would last long, since they, for such a length of time, had not seen each other. There arose that day a fight, and one of the men from the northern mountains received a deadly wound, and was carried down under a bush on the bank of the river: much blood

<sup>101</sup> "A similar fancy for party-colored dresses," says Moore, "existed among the Celts of Gaul, and Diodorus describes the people as wearing garments flowered with all varieties of colors, — *χρώμασι παντοδαποῖς διακοσμημένους*, Lib. 5. The braccæ, or breeches, was so called from being plaided, the word *brac* signifying in Celtic any thing speckled or party-colored." According to O'Brien, the Hiberno-Celtic word is *breac*. In the reign of the

Irish monarch Achy, a law was enacted regulating the number of colors by which the garments of the different classes of society were to be distinguished, and from these party-colored dresses, worn by the ancient Scots or Irish, is derived the present national costume [still called *brekan*] of their descendants in North Britain. — *Hist. Ir.*, I. pp. 109, 110; O'Brien, *Irish Dict. in voce breac*, Lluyd. Arch. Brit. — *Beamish*.



blood flowed from the wound, so that there was a pool of blood in the bush. There was the boy Kjartan, son of Thurid of Froda; he had a small axe in his hand; he ran to the bush, and dipped the axe in the blood. When the men from the southern mountains rode southwards from the meeting, Thord Blig asked Björn how the discourse had turned out betwixt him and Thurid of Froda. Björn said that he was well contented therewith. Then asked Thord, whether he had that day seen the lad Kjartan, her and Thorodd's united son. "Him saw I," said Björn. "What do you think of him?" quoth Thord, again. Then chaunted Björn this stave:—

A stripling, lo!  
 With fearful eyes  
 And woman's image,  
 Downwards ran  
 To the wolf's lair.  
 The people say  
 The youth knows not  
 His Viking father.

Thord said: "What will Thorodd say when he hears of your boy?" Then sung Björn:—

Then will the noble lady,  
 When pressing to her breast  
 The image of his father  
 In her fair arms to rest,  
 Admit Thorodd's conjecture;  
 For me she ever loved,  
 And ever shall I bear her  
 Affection deep and proved.

Thord

Thord said: "It will be better for ye not to have much to do with each other, and that thou turn thy thoughts from Thurid." "That is surely a good counsel," replied Björn, "but far is that from my intention, although it makes some difference when I have to do with such a man as Snorri her brother." "Thou wilt be sorry for thy doings," said Thord; and therewith ended the talk between them. Björn went home now to Kamb, and took upon himself the management of the place, for his father was then dead. In the winter he began his trips over the heath, to visit Thurid; and although Thorodd did not like it, he yet saw that it was not easy to find a remedy, and he thought over with himself how dearly it had cost him, when he sought to stop their intercourse; but he saw that Björn was now much stronger than before. Thorodd bribed, in the winter, Thorgrim Galdrakin to raise a tempest against Björn, when he was crossing the heath. Now it came to pass one day, that Björn came to Froda, and in the evening, when he was going home, was there thick weather and some rain; and he set off very late; but when he had gotten up on the heath, the weather became cold, and it snowed; and so dark that he saw not the way before him. After that arose a drift of snow, with so much fleet that he could scarcely keep his legs; his clothes were now frozen, for he was before wet through, and he strayed about, so that he knew not where to turn; hit, at night, upon the edge of a cave, went in, and was there for the night, and had a cold lodging; then sung Björn:—

Fair

Fair one ! who dost bring  
 Vestments to the weary,<sup>102</sup>  
 Little know'st thou where,  
 Hid in cavern dreary,  
 I now shelter seek :  
 He that once on ocean  
 Boldly steered a bark,  
 Now lies without motion  
 In a cavern dark.

And again he chaunted :—

The swan's cold region I have crossed  
 All eastwards with a goodly freight,  
 For woman's love, by tempest tost  
 And seeking danger in the fight ;  
 But now no woman's couch I tread,  
 A rocky cavern is my bed.

Björn remained three days in the cave, before the weather moderated ; but on the fourth day came he home from the heath to Kamb. He was much exhausted. The servants asked him where he had been during the tempest. Björn sang :—

Well my deeds are known  
 Under Styrbjörn's banner,  
 Steel-clad Erik flew  
 Gallant men in battle ;  
 Now on mountain wild,  
 Met by magic shower,

Outlet

<sup>102</sup> To the women of the Northern family was more particularly entrusted the duties of hospitality, among which was included that of bringing dry gar-

ments to the traveller who had suffered from the tempestuousness of the weather. — *Antiq. Amer.*, p. 236, note a. — *Beamsft.*

Outlet could not find  
From the Witches' power.<sup>108</sup>

Björn was now at home for the winter. In spring his brother Arnbjörn fixed his residence at Bakke in Raunhöfn, but Björn lived at Kamb, and kept a splendid house. . . .

The same summer bade Thorodd the Tribute-buyer his brother-in-law Snorri Godi to a feast at home at Froda, and Snorri betook himself thither with twenty men. And while Snorri was at the feast, disclosed Thorodd to him how he felt himself both disgraced and injured by the visits which Björn Asbrandson made to Thurid his wife, but sister to Snorri Godi: Thorodd said that Snorri should remedy this bad business. Snorri was there a few days, and Thorodd gave him costly presents when he went away. Snorri Godi rode from thence over the heath, and gave out that he was going to the ship in the Bay of Raunhöfn. This was in summer, at the time of haymaking. But when they came south on Kamb's heath, then said Snorri: "Now will we ride from the heath down to Kamb, and I will tell you," said he, "that I will visit Björn, and take his life, if opportunity offers, but not attack him in the house, for the buildings are strong

<sup>108</sup> These poetical effusions of Björn may, perhaps, appear somewhat improbable to English readers, but the Northmen of this period exhibited great readiness in a species of rude versification, the melody of which was chiefly formed on alliteration. "As late as the time of Chaucer," says Sir Walter Scott, "it was considered as the mark of a Northern man to 'affect the letter.'" And his parson thus apologizes for not reciting a piece of poetry: —

"But trusteth wel I am a Sotherne man,  
I cannot geste *rom, rum, raf*, by my letter,  
And God wot, rime hold I but little better."  
*Abstract of Eyrbyggja Saga.*

"Cette singulière manière de s'exprimer étoit pourtant assez commune, et peut marquer seule combien ces peuples faisoient de cas de la Poésie."  
— *Mallet, Introd. à l'Hist. de Danemarck*, p. 247. — *Beamish*.

strong here, and Björn is strong and hardy, and we have but little force; and it is well known that men who have come, even so, with great force, have, with little success, attacked such valiant men, inside in the house, as was the case with Geir Godi, and Gissur the white, when they attacked Gunnar of Lidarend, in his house, with eighty men, but he was there alone, and nevertheless were some wounded, and others killed; and they had stayed the attack, had not Geir Godi, with his heedfulness, observed that he was short of arms. But so far as," continued he, "Björn is now out, which may be expected, as it is good drying weather, so appoint I thee, my kinsman Mar, to fetch Björn the first wound; but consider well that he is no man to trifle with, and that, wherever he is, you may expect a hard blow from a savage wolf, if he, at the onset, receives not such a wound as will cause his death." And now when they rode down from the moor to the farm, saw they that Björn was out in the homestead, working at a sledge,<sup>104</sup> and there was nobody with him, and no weapons had he except a little axe, and a large knife, of a span's length from the haft, which he used for boring the holes in the sledge. Björn saw that Snorri Godi with his followers rode down from the moor into the field, and knew them immediately. Snorri Godi was in a blue cloak, and rode in front. Björn made an immediate resolve, and took the knife, and went straight towards them; when they came together, he seized with the one hand the arm of Snorri's cloak, and with the other held he the knife  
in

<sup>104</sup> Small wooden unshod sledges are used in Scandinavia for drawing in hay to the haggart, in the summer season. — *Beamish.*

in such a manner as was most easy for him to stab Snorri through the breast, if he should think fit to do so. Björn greeted them, as they met, and Snorri greeted him again; but Mar dropped his hands, for it struck him that Björn could soon hurt Snorri, if any injury was done to him. Upon this Björn went with them on their way, and asked what news they had, but held himself in the same position which he had taken at the first. Then took up Björn the discourse in this manner: "It stands truly so, friend Snorri, that I conceal not I have acted towards you in such wise that you may well accuse me, and I have been told that you have a hostile intention towards me. Now it seems to me best," continued he, "that if you have any business with me, other than passing by here to the high road, you should let me know it; but be that not the case, then would I that you grant me peace, and I will then turn back, for I go not in leading strings." Snorri answered: "Such a lucky grip took thou of me at our meeting, that thou must have peace this time, however it may have been determined before; but this I beg of thee, that from henceforth thou cease to inveigle Thurid, for it will not end well between us, if thou, in this respect, continue as thou hast begun." Björn replied: "That only will I promise thee which I can perform, but I see not how I can hold to this, so long as Thurid and I are in the same district." "Thou art not so much bound to this place," answered Snorri, "but that thou couldest easily give up thy residence here." Björn replied: "True is that which thou sayest, and thus shall it be; since you have yourself come to me, and as our meeting has thus turned out, will I promise thee that Thorodd and thou shalt have  
no



no more trouble about my visits to Thurid for the next year." After this they separated; Snorri Godi rode to the ship, and then home to Helgafell. The day following rode Björn southwards to Raunhöfn to go to sea, and he got immediately, in the summer, a place in a ship, and they were very soon ready. They put to sea with a north-east wind, which wind lasted long during the summer; but of this ship was nothing heard since this long time.

VOYAGE OF GUDLEIF GUDLAUGSON.

A. D. 1029.

*Eyrbyggja Saga*, Chap. 64; *Vellum Fragment*, No. 4456, in 4to.

THERE was a man called Gudleif; he was son of Gudlaug the Rich, of Straumfjord, and brother of Thorfinn, from whom the Sturlungers are descended. Gudleif was a great merchant, he had a merchant ship, but Thorolf Eyrar Loftson had another, that time they fought against Gyrð, son of Sigvald Jarl: then lost Gyrð his eye. It happened in the last years of the reign of King Olaf the Saint that Gudleif undertook a trading voyage to Dublin;<sup>105</sup> but when he failed from the west, intended he to sail to Iceland; he failed then from the west of Ireland, and met with north-east winds, and was driven far to the west and south-west, in the sea, where no land was to be seen. But it was already far gone in the summer, and they made many prayers

<sup>105</sup> Some of the MSS. add "*vestr*," lying westwards from Iceland.—*Bea-* showing that Ireland was spoken of as *míð*.

prayers that they might escape from the sea; and it came to pass that they saw land. It was a great land, but they knew not what land it was. Then took they the resolve to sail to the land, for they were weary of contending longer with the violence of the sea. They found there a good harbor; and when they had been a short time on shore, came people to them: they knew none of the people, but it rather appeared to them that they spoke Irish.<sup>108</sup> Soon came to them so great a number that it made up many hundreds. These men fell upon them and seized them all, and bound them, and drove them up the country. There were they brought before an assembly, to be judged. They understood so much that some were for killing them, but others would have them distributed amongst the inhabitants, and made slaves. And while this was going on, saw they where rode a great body of men, and a large banner was borne in the midst. Then thought they that there must be a chief in the troop; but when it came near, saw they that under the banner rode a large and dignified man, who was much in years, and whose hair was white. All present bowed down before the man, and received him as well as they could. Now observed they that all opinions and resolutions concerning their business were submitted to his decision. Then ordered this man Gudleif and his companions to be brought before him, and when they had come

<sup>108</sup> "En helzt þotti þeim, sem þeir mælti írsku." This is a very remarkable passage, and affords the strongest grounds for believing that the country to which they were driven had been previously colonized from Ireland. The Northmen, from their intercourse with

the Irish poets, might be supposed to have had just sufficient knowledge of the language to detect its sounds (here probably corrupted), and understand the general meaning of the words.—*Beamsir.*

come before this man, spoke he to them in the Northern tongue,<sup>107</sup> and asked them from what country they came. They answered him that the most of them were Icelanders. The man asked which of them were Icelanders? Gudleif said that he was an Icelandic. He then saluted the old man, and he received it well, and asked from what part of Iceland he came. Gudleif said that he was from that district which was called Borgarfjord. Then inquired he from what part of Borgarfjord he came, and Gudleif answered just as it was. Then asked this man about almost every one of the principal men in Borgarfjord and Breidafjord; and when they talked thereon, inquired he minutely about every thing, first of Snorri Godi, and his sister Thurid of Froda, and most about Kjartan her son. The people of the country now called out, on the other side, that some decision should be made about the seamen. After this went the great man away from them, and named twelve of his men with himself, and they sat a long time talking. Then went they to the meeting of the people, and the old man said to Gudleif: "I and the people of the country have talked together about your business, and the people have left the matter to me; but I will now give ye leave to depart whence ye will; but although ye may think that the summer is almost gone, yet will I counsel ye to remove from hence, for here are the people not to be trusted, and bad to deal with, and they think besides that the laws have been broken to their injury." Gudleif answered: "What shall we say, if fate permits us to return to our own country, who has given us this freedom?" He answered: "That can I not tell you,

<sup>107</sup> Norrænu. See *antea*, note 30.

you, for I like not that my relations and foster-brothers should make such a journey hereto, as ye would have made, if ye had not had the benefit of my help; but now is my age so advanced that I may expect every hour old age to overpower me; and even if I could live yet for a time, there are here more powerful men than me, who little peace would give to foreigners that might come here, although they be not just here in the neighborhood where ye landed." Then caused he their ship to be made ready for sea, and was there with them, until a fair wind sprung up, which was favorable to take them from the land. But before they separated took this man a gold ring from his hand, and gave it into the hands of Gudleif, and therewith a good sword; then said he to Gudleif: "If the fates permit you to come to your own country, then shall you take this sword to the yeoman, Kjartan of Froda, but the ring to Thurid his mother." Gudleif replied: "What shall I say, about it, as to who sends them these valuables?" He answered: "Say that he sends them who was a better friend of the lady of Froda than of her brother, Godi of Helgafell; but if any man therefore thinks that he knows who has owned these articles, then say these my words, that I forbid any one to come to me, for it is the most dangerous expedition, unless it happens as fortunately with others at the landing-place as with you; but here is the land great, and bad as to harbors, and in all parts may strangers expect hostility, when it does not turn out as has been with you." After this, Gudleif and his people put to sea, and they landed in Ireland late in harvest, and were in Dublin for the winter. But in the summer after, sailed they to Iceland, and Gudleif delivered



delivered over there these valuables; and people held it for certain that this man was BJÖRN, THE CHAMPION OF BREIDAVÍK, and no other account to be relied on is there in confirmation of this, except that which is now given here.<sup>108</sup>

<sup>108</sup> The reader will no doubt come to the same conclusion drawn by the Icelanders respecting the identity of the aged chief, to whose generosity and friendly feeling Gudleif and his companions were so much indebted, and unhesitatingly pronounce him to have been none other than BJÖRN ASBRANDSON, THE CHAMPION OF BREIDAVÍK, who, it will be remembered, had set sail about thirty years before, with a north-east wind, and had not since been heard of. The remarkable accordance of all the personal details, to which the writer evidently attaches the principal importance, with the historical events, which are only incidentally alluded to, enable us to determine dates and intervals of time with a degree of accuracy that places the truth of the narrative beyond all question, and gives a high degree of interest to these two voyages. The mention of Sigurd Jarl of the Orkneys, Palnatoki, Styrbjörn the nephew of Erik of Sweden, the battle of Fyrifvöld, Snorri Godi, "the latter part of the reign of King Olaf the Saint," gives a chronological character to the narratives, and enables us to fix with confidence nearly the exact period of the principal events. Hence it appears that Gudleif Gudlaugson, sailing from the west of Ireland in the year 1029, with a north-east wind, is driven far to the south and south-west, where no land was to be seen, and that, after being exposed for many days to the violence of the winds and waves, he at length finds shelter upon a coast, where Björn Asbrandson, who had left Iceland with north-east winds thirty years before,

had become established as chief of the inhabitants of the country. He finds him, as might naturally have been expected, "stricken in years," and "his hair was white;" for Björn had left Iceland for Jomfborg in the prime of life, had, after taking part in the achievements of the Jomsvikings up to the death of Palnatoki in 993, returned to and resided in Iceland until 999, and now thirty winters had passed over his head since his ultimate departure from his native land. The locality of the newly discovered country is next to be determined. Now if a line be drawn running north-east and south-west, the course of Björn Asbrandson, from the western coast of Iceland, and another in the same direction (the course of Gudleif Gudlaugson) from the west coast of Ireland, they would intersect each other on the southern shores of the United States, somewhere about Carolina or Georgia. This position accords well with the description of the locality of their country, given by the Skraelings to Thorfinn Karlsefne, and which the Northmen believed to be White Man's Land, or GREAT IRELAND, as also with the geographical notices of the same land which have been already adduced; and when to these evidences be added the statements of Gudleif and his companions respecting the language of the natives, "*which appeared to them to be Irish*," there is every reason to conclude that this was the Hvíttramannaland, Albania, or Irland ed mikla of the Northmen.

The notices of the country contained  
in

in these two narratives are, doubtless, scanty, and merely incidental, the object of the narrators being evidently to trace the romantic and adventurous career of the Champion of Breidavik, and the perilous voyage of his countrymen, but this very circumstance is an argument in favor of the honesty of the statement as regards the supposed Irish settlement; and the simple and unpretending character of both narratives, supported as they are by historical references, confirmatory of the principal events, gives to these incidental allusions a degree of importance to which they would not otherwise be entitled.

Professor Rafn is of opinion that the White Man's Land, or Great Ireland of the Northmen, was the country situated to the south of Chesapeake Bay, including North and South Carolina, Georgia, and East Florida. — *Beamsis*.

NOTE. — There are intimations in Scandinavian manuscripts of other voyages made to the north and west, — as that of Erik, Bishop of Greenland, in 1121, that of Adalbrand and Helgason in 1285, and another in 1347, — but of these the information is too indefinite to be in any degree satisfactory, and accordingly they have not been included in this collection.







A SYNOPSIS  
OF THE  
HISTORICAL EVIDENCE CONTAINED IN THE  
PRECEDING PAGES.<sup>109</sup>

BY PROFESSOR CHARLES CHRISTIAN RAFN.

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BIARNE HERIULFSON'S VOYAGE IN THE YEAR 986.



RIK THE RED, in the spring of 986, emigrated from Iceland to Greenland, formed a settlement there, and fixed his residence at Brattahlid in Eriksfiord. Among others who accompanied him was Heriulf Bardson, who established himself at Heriulfsnes. BIARNE, the son of the latter, was at that time absent on a trading voyage to Norway; but in the course of the summer returning to Eyrar, in Iceland, and finding that his father had taken his departure, this bold navigator resolved "still to spend the following winter, like all the preceding ones, with his father," although neither he nor any of his people had ever navigated the Greenland sea.

<sup>109</sup> From "Antiquitates Americanæ," collated with the American reprint of 1838.

## *Synopsis of the Evidence.* 99

sea. They set sail, but met with northerly winds and fogs, and, after many days' failing, knew not whither they had been carried. At length, when the weather again cleared up, they saw a land which was without mountains, overgrown with wood, and having many gentle elevations. As this land did not correspond to the descriptions of Greenland, they left it on the larboard hand, and continued failing two days, when they saw another land, which was flat, and overgrown with wood. From thence they stood out to sea, and sailed three days with a south-west wind, when they saw a third land, which was high and mountainous, and covered with icebergs (*glaciers*); they coasted along the shore, and saw that it was an island. They did not go on shore, as Biarne did not find the country to be inviting. Bearing away from this island, they stood out to sea with the same wind, and, after four days' failing with fresh gales, they reached Heriulfsnes, in Greenland.

### DISCOVERIES OF LEIF ERIKSON, AND FIRST SETTLEMENT OF VINELAND.

Some time after this, probably in the year 994, Biarne paid a visit to Erik, Earl of Norway, and told him of his voyage, and of the unknown lands he had discovered. He was blamed by many for not having examined these countries more accurately. On his return to Greenland, there was much talk about undertaking a voyage of discovery. LEIF, a son of Erik the Red, bought Biarne's ship, and equipped it with a crew of thirty-five men, among whom was a German, of the name of TYRKER, who had long resided with his father,

U 67 61

father, and who had been very fond of Leif in his childhood. In the year 1000 they commenced the projected voyage, and came first to the land which Biarne had seen last. They cast anchor and went on shore. No grafs was seen; but everywhere in this country were vast ice-mountains (*glaciers*), and the intermediate space between these and the shore was, as it were, one uniform plain of slate (*hella*): the country appearing to them destitute of good qualities, they called it HELLULAND. They put out to sea, and came to another land where they also went on shore. The country was level (*flött*) and covered with woods, and, wheresoever they went, there were cliffs of white sand (*sand-ar hvítir*), and a low coast (*ó-fæ-bratt*); they called the country MARKLAND (*Woodland*). From thence they again stood out to sea, with a north-east wind, and continued sailing for two days before they made land again. They then came to an island which lay to the eastward of the mainland, and entered a channel between this island and a promontory projecting in an easterly (and northerly) direction from the mainland. They sailed westward in waters where there was much ground left dry at ebb-tide. Afterwards they went on shore at a place where a river, issuing from a lake, fell into the sea. They brought their ship into the river, and from thence into the lake, where they cast anchor. Here they constructed some temporary log-huts; but, afterwards, when they had made up their mind to winter there, they built large houses, afterwards called LEIFSBÚÐIR (*Leifsbooths*). When the buildings were completed, Leif divided his people into two companies, who were by turns employed in keeping watch at the houses,  
and

and in making small excursions for the purpose of exploring the country in the vicinity: his instructions to them were, that they should not go to a greater distance than that they might return in the course of the same evening, and that they should not separate from one another. Leif took his turn also, joining the exploring party the one day, and remaining at the houses the other. It so happened that one day the German, Tyrker, was missing. Leif accordingly went out with twelve men in search of him, but they had not gone far from their houses, when they met him coming towards them. When Leif inquired why he had been so long absent, he at first answered in German, but they did not understand what he said. He then said to them in the Norse tongue: "I did not go much farther, yet I have a discovery to acquaint you with; I have found vines and grapes." He added, by way of confirmation, that he had been born in a country where there was plenty of vines. They had now two occupations; viz., to hew timber for loading the ship, and collect grapes: with these last they filled the ship's long-boat. Leif gave a name to the country, and called it VINLAND (*Vineland*). In the spring they sailed again from thence, and returned to Greenland.

THORWALD ERIKSON'S EXPEDITION TO MORE SOUTHERN  
REGIONS.

Leif's Vineland voyage was now a subject of frequent conversation in Greenland, and his brother THORWALD was of opinion that the country had not been sufficiently explored. He accordingly borrowed Leif's ship, and, aided  
by



by his brother's counsel and directions, commenced a voyage in the year 1002. He arrived at Leifsbooths, in Vineland, where they spent the winter, he and his crew employing themselves in fishing. In the spring of 1003 Thorwald sent a party in the ship's long-boat on a voyage of discovery southwards. They found the country beautiful and well wooded, with but little space between the woods and the sea; there were likewise extensive ranges of white sand, and many islands and shallows. They found no traces of men having been there before them, excepting on an island lying to the westward, where they found a wooden shed. They did not return to Leifsbooths until the fall. In the following summer, 1004, Thorwald sailed eastward with the large ship, and then northward past a remarkable headland enclosing a bay, and which was opposite to another headland. They called it KIALARNES (*Keel-Cape*). From thence they sailed along the eastern coast of the land, into the nearest firths, to a promontory which there projected, and which was everywhere overgrown with wood. There Thorwald went ashore with all his companions. He was so pleased with this place that he exclaimed: "This is beautiful! and here I should like well to fix my dwelling!" Afterwards, when they were preparing to go on board, they observed on the sandy beach, within the promontory, three hillocks, and repairing thither they found three canoes, under each of which were three Skrælings (Esquimaux); they came to blows with the latter, and killed eight, but the ninth escaped with his canoe. Afterwards a countless number issued forth against them from the interior of the bay. They endeavored to protect themselves by raising battle screens on the ship's

ship's side. The Skrælings continued shooting at them for awhile, and then retired. Thorwald was wounded by an arrow under the arm; and, finding that the wound was mortal, he said: "I now advise you to prepare for your departure as soon as possible, but me ye shall bring to the promontory, where I thought it good to dwell; it may be that it was a prophetic word that fell from my mouth about my abiding there for a season; there shall ye bury me, and plant a cross at my head, and another at my feet, and call the place KROSSANES (*Crossness*) in all time coming." He died, and they did as he had ordered. Afterwards, they returned to their companions at Leifsbooths, and spent the winter there; but, in the spring of 1005, they sailed again to Greenland, having important intelligence to communicate to Leif.

#### UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPT OF THORSTEIN ERIKSON.

Thorstein, Erik's third son, had resolved to proceed to Vineland to fetch his brother's body. He fitted out the same ship, and selected twenty-five strong and able-bodied men for his crew: his wife, Gudrida, also went along with him. They were tossed about the ocean during the whole summer, and knew not whither they were driven; but at the close of the first week of winter they landed at Lyfufiord, in the western settlement of Greenland. There Thorstein died during the winter; and, in the spring, Gudrida returned again to Eriksfiord.

Settlement



## SETTLEMENT EFFECTED IN VINELAND, BY THORFINN.

In the following summer, 1006, there arrived in Greenland two ships from Iceland: the one was commanded by THORFINN, having the very significant surname of KARLSEFNE (*i.e.*, one who promises, or is destined to be an able or great man), a wealthy and powerful man, of illustrious lineage, and sprung from Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, Irish, and Scottish ancestors, some of whom were kings or of royal descent. He was accompanied by SNORRE THORBRANDSON, who was also a man of distinguished lineage. The other ship was commanded by BIARNE GRIMOLFSON, of Breidefiord, and THORHALL GAMLASON, of Austfiord. They kept the festival of Yule, or Christmas, at Brattahlid. Thorfinn became enamoured of Gudrida, and obtained the consent of her brother-in-law, Leif; and their marriage was celebrated in the course of the winter. On this, as on former occasions, the voyage to Vineland formed a favorite theme of conversation, and Thorfinn was urged both by his wife and others to undertake such a voyage. It was accordingly resolved on. In the spring of 1007, Karlsefne and Snorre fitted out their ship, and Biarne and Thorhall likewise equipped theirs. A third ship (being that in which Gudrida's father, Thorbiörn, had formerly come to Greenland) was commanded by THORWARD, who was married to FREYDISA, a natural daughter of Erik the Red; and on board the ship was also a man of the name of THORHALL, who had long served Erik as huntsman in summer and as house-steward in winter, and who had much acquaintance with the uncolonized parts of Greenland.

Greenland. The whole expedition consisted of one hundred and sixty men; and they took with them all kinds of live stock, it being their intention to establish a colony, if possible. They sailed first to the Westerbygd, and afterwards to Biarney (*Disco*). From thence they sailed in a southerly direction to HELLULAND, where they found many foxes; and again two days in a southerly direction to MARKLAND, — a country overgrown with wood, and plentifully stocked with animals. Leaving this, they continued in a south-west direction for a long time, having the land to starboard, until they at length came to KIALARNES, where there were trackless deserts and long beaches and sands, called by them FURÐUSTRANDIR. Passing these, they found the land indented by inlets. They had two Scots with them, HAKE and HEKIA, whom Leif had formerly received from the Norwegian king, Olaf Tryggvason, and who were very swift of foot. They put them on shore, recommending them to proceed in a south-west direction, and explore the country. After the lapse of three days they returned, bringing with them some grapes and some ears of wheat, which grew wild in that region. They continued their course until they came to a place where a firth penetrated far into the country. Off the mouth of it was an island, past which there ran strong currents, which was also the case farther up the firth. On the island there were an immense number of eider-ducks, so that it was scarcely possible to walk without treading on their eggs. They called the island STRAUMEY (*Stream Isle*), and the firth STRAUMFIÖRÐR (*Stream Firth*). They landed on the shore of this firth, and made preparations for their winter residence. The country was extremely beautiful.

beautiful. They confined their operations to exploring the country. Thorhall afterwards wished to proceed in a north direction in quest of Vineland. Karlsefne chose rather to go to the south-west. Thorhall, and eight men with him, quitted them, and sailed past Furðustrandir and Kialarnes; but they were driven by westerly gales to the coast of Ireland, where, according to the accounts of some traders, they were beaten and made slaves. Karlsefne, together with Snorre and Biarne, and the rest of the ships' companies, in all one hundred and thirty-one (CXXXI.) men, sailed southwards, and arrived at the place where a river falls into the sea from a lake. Opposite to the mouth of the river were large islands. They steered into the lake, and called the place HÓP (*i Hópe*). On the low grounds they found fields of wheat growing wild; and on the rising ground, vines. While looking about one morning, they observed a great number of canoes. As they exhibited friendly signals, the canoes approached nearer to them, and the natives looked with astonishment at those they met there. These people were fallow, and ill-looking; had ugly heads of hair, large eyes, and broad cheeks. After they had gazed at them for awhile, they rowed away again to the south-west past the cape. Karlsefne and his company had erected their dwelling-houses a little above the bay, and there they spent the winter. No snow fell, and the cattle found their food in the open field. One morning early, in the beginning of 1008, they descried a number of canoes coming from the south-west past the cape. Karlsefne having held up a white shield as a friendly signal, they drew nigh, and immediately commenced bartering. These people chose in preference red cloth, and gave

gave furs and squirrel skins in exchange. They would fain also have bought swords and spears, but these Karlsefne and Snorre prohibited their people from felling. In exchange for a skin, entirely gray, the Skrælings took a piece of cloth of a span in breadth, and bound it round their heads. Their barter was carried on in this way for some time. The Northmen found that their cloth was beginning to grow scarce, whereupon they cut it up in smaller pieces, not broader than a finger's breadth; yet the Skrælings gave as much for these smaller pieces as they had formerly given for the larger ones, or even more. Karlsefne also caused the women to make and pour out milk soup, and the Skrælings relishing the taste of it, they desired to buy it in preference to every thing else; so they wound up their traffic by carrying away their bargains in their stomachs. Whilst this trade was going on, it happened that a bull, which Karlsefne had brought along with him, came out of the wood and bellowed loudly. At this the Skrælings became terrified, rushed to their canoes, and rowed away southwards. About this time, Gudrida, Karlsefne's wife, gave birth to a son, who received the name of SNORRE. In the beginning of the following winter the Skrælings came again in much greater numbers; they showed symptoms of hostility, setting up loud yells. Karlsefne caused the red shield to be borne against them, whereupon they advanced against each other, and a battle commenced. There was a galling discharge of missiles. The Skrælings had a sort of war slings; they elevated on a pole a tremendously large ball, almost the size of a sheep's stomach, and of a bluish color; this they swung from the pole upon land over Karlsefne's people, and it descended with



with a fearful crash. This struck terror into the Northmen, and they fled along the river. Freydisa came out, and seeing them flying, she exclaimed: "How can stout men like you fly from these miserable caitiffs, whom I thought you could knock down like cattle! If I had only a weapon, I ween I could fight better than any of you!" They heeded not her words. She tried to keep pace with them, but the advanced state of her pregnancy retarded her: she, however, followed them into the wood. There she encountered a dead body: it was THORBRAND SNORRASON; a flat stone was sticking fast in his head, and his naked sword lay by his side; this she took up, and prepared to defend herself. She uncovered her bosom, and struck it with the naked sword. At this sight the Skraelings became terrified, and ran off to their canoes. Karlsefne and the rest now came up to her, and praised her courage. They were now become aware that, although the country held out many advantages, still the life that they would have to lead here would be one of constant alarm from the hostile attacks of the natives. They therefore made preparations for departure, with the resolution of returning to their own country. Sailing eastward, they arrived in Streamfirth. Karlsefne then took one of the ships, and sailed in quest of Thorhall, while the rest remained behind. They proceeded northwards round Kialarnes, and, after that, were carried to the north-west. The land lay to the larboard of them; there were thick forests in all directions, as far as they could see, with scarcely any open space. They considered the hills at Hope, and those which they now saw, as forming part of one continued range. They spent the third winter at Streamfirth. Karlsefne's son,  
Snorre,



Snorre, was now three years of age. When they failed from Vineland, they had southerly wind, and came to Markland, where they met with five Skrælings. They caught two of them (two boys), whom they carried away with them, and taught them the Norse language, and baptized them. These children said that their mother was called VETHILLDI, and their father UVÆGE; they said that the Skrælings were ruled by chieftains (kings), one of whom was called AVALLDAMON, and the other VALDIDIDA; that there were no houses in the country, but that the people dwelt in holes and caverns. Biarne Grimolfson was driven into the Irish Ocean, and came into waters that were so infested with worms that their ship was in consequence reduced to a sinking state. Some of the crew, however, were saved in the boat, as it had been smeared with seal-oil tar, which is a preventive against the attack of worms. Karlsefne continued his voyage to Greenland, and arrived at Eriksfiord.

VOYAGE OF FREYDISA, HELGE, AND FINNBOGE; THORFINN  
SETTLES IN ICELAND.

During the same summer, 1011, there arrived in Greenland a ship from Norway, commanded by two brothers, from Austfiord in Iceland, HELGE and FINNBOGE, who passed the following winter in Greenland. FREYDISA went to them, and proposed a voyage to Vineland, on the condition that they should share equally with her in all the profits which the voyage might yield: to this they assented. Freydisa and these brothers entered into a mutual agreement that each party should have thirty able-bodied men on board their  
their

their ship, besides women; but Freydifa immediately deviated from the agreement, and took with her five additional men, whom she concealed. In 1012 they arrived at Leifs-booths, where they spent the following winter. The conduct of Freydifa occasioned a coolness and distance between the parties; and by her subtle arts she ultimately prevailed on her husband to massacre the brothers and their followers. After the perpetration of this base deed, they, in the spring of 1013, returned to Greenland, where Thorfinn lay ready to sail for Norway, and was waiting for a fair wind: the ship he commanded was so richly laden, that it was generally admitted that a more valuable cargo had never left Greenland. As soon as the wind became favorable he sailed to Norway, where he spent the following winter, and sold his goods. Next year, when he was ready to sail for Iceland, there came a German from Bremen, who wanted to buy a piece of wood from him: he gave for it half a mark of gold: it was the wood of the Mazer-tree, from Vineland. Karlsefne went to Iceland, and in the following year, 1015, he bought the Glaumbœ estate, in Skagefiord, in the northland quarter, where he resided during the remainder of his life. His son, Snorre, who had been born in America, was his successor on this estate. When the latter married, his mother made a pilgrimage to Rome, and afterwards returned to her son's house at Glaumbœ, where he had in the mean time ordered a church to be built. The mother lived long as a religious recluse. A numerous and illustrious race descended from Karlsefne, among whom may be mentioned the learned bishop Thorlak Runolfson, born in 1085, of Snorre's daughter, Halfrida, to whom we are principally indebted

indebted for the oldest ecclesiastical Code of Iceland, published in the year 1123; it is also probable that the accounts of the voyages here mentioned were originally compiled by him.





## THE OPINION OF PROFESSOR RAFN

AS TO THE

IDENTITY OF THE PLACES VISITED ON THE AMERICAN  
COAST BY THE SCANDINAVIAN VOYAGERS.

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A SURVEY OF THE PRECEDING EVIDENCE.

GEOGRAPHY AND HYDROGRAPHY.

It is a fortunate circumstance that these ancient accounts have preserved not only *geographical*, but also *nautical* and *astronomical facts*, that may serve in fixing the position of the lands and places named. The *nautical facts* are of special importance, although hitherto they have not been sufficiently attended to; these consist in statements of the course steered and the distance sailed in a day. From data in the Landnama and several other ancient Icelandic geographical works, we may gather that the distance of a day's sailing was estimated at twenty-seven to thirty geographical miles (German or Danish, of which fifteen are equal to a degree, each

## *Identity of the Places Visited.* 113

each of these being, accordingly, equal to four English sea-miles). From the island of HELLULAND, afterwards called little Helluland, Biarne sailed to Heriulfsnes (*Ikigeit*), in Greenland, with strong south-westerly gales, in four days. The distance between that cape and *Newfoundland* is about one hundred and fifty miles, which will correspond, when we take into consideration the strong gales. In modern descriptions it is stated that this land partly consists of naked rocky flats, where no tree, nor even a shrub, can grow, and which are therefore usually called *Barrens*; thus answering completely to the *hellur* of the ancient Northmen, from which they named the country.

MARKLAND was situate to the south-west of Helluland, distant about three days' sail, or from eighty to ninety miles. Here, then, we have *Nova Scotia*, of which the descriptions given by later writers answer to that given by the ancient Northmen of Markland: "the land is low in general;" "the coast to the sea-ward being level and low, and the shores marked with white rocks;" "the land is low, with white sandy cliffs, particularly visible at sea," says the new "North American Pilot," by J. W. Norie, and another American sailor: "on the shore are some cliffs of exceedingly white sand." Here "*level*" corresponds completely to the Icelandic "*flætt*," "*low to the sea-ward*" to the short expression "*ó-fæ-bratt*," and "*white sandy cliffs*" to the "*hvít-ir sand-ar*" of the Northmen. Nova Scotia, as also New Brunswick and Lower Canada, situate more inland, which probably may be considered as all belonging to the Markland of the Northmen, are almost everywhere covered with immense forests.

VINLAND



VINLAND was situate at the distance of two days' sail, consequently from fifty-four to sixty miles, in a south-westerly direction from Markland. The distance from Cape Sable to Cape Cod is stated in nautical works as being west by south about seventy leagues; that is, about two hundred miles. Biarne's description of the coast is very accurate, and in the island situate to the eastward (between which and the promontory that stretches to eastward and northward Leif sailed) we recognize Nantucket. The ancient Northmen found there many shallows (*grunnfœfui mikit*); modern navigators make mention at the same place "of numerous reefs and other shoals," and say "that the whole presents an aspect of drowned land."

KIALARNES (from *kiölr*, a keel, and *nes*, a cape, most likely so named on account of its striking resemblance to the keel of a ship, particularly of one of the long ships of the ancient Northmen) must consequently be *Cape Cod*, the NAUSET of the Indians, which modern geographers have sometimes likened to a Horn, and sometimes to a Sickle, or Scythe. The ancient Northmen found here trackless deserts (*örafí*), and long narrow beaches and sand-hills, or sands (*strandir lángr ok sandar*) of a very peculiar appearance, on which account they called them FURDUSTRANDIR (*Wonder-strands*, from *furda*, res miranda, and *strönd*, strand, beach). Compare the description given of this cape by a modern author, Hitchcock: "The *Dunes*, or *sand-hills*, which are often nearly or quite barren of vegetation, and of snowy whiteness, *forcibly attract the attention on account of their peculiarity*. As we approach the extremity of the cape, the sand and barrenness increase; and in not a few places it would  
need

need only a party of Bedouin Arabs to cross the traveller's path, to make him feel that he was in the depths of *an Arabian or Libyan desert*." A remarkable natural phenomenon, which is observed there, has also most probably had a share in giving rise to that peculiar name. It is thus described by the same author: "In crossing *the sands* of the cape, I noticed a *singular mirage* or deception. In Orleans, for instance, we seemed to be ascending at an angle of three or four degrees; nor was I convinced that such was not the case, until turning about I perceived that a similar ascent appeared in the road just passed over. I shall not attempt to explain this optical deception, but merely remark that it is probably of the same kind as that observed by Humboldt on the Pampas of Venezuela: 'All around us,' says he, 'the plains seemed to ascend towards the sky.'" Thus we observe that the appellation given by the ancient Northmen to the three strands or tracts of coast, *Nauset Beach*, *Chatham Beach*, and *Monomoy Beach*, is remarkably appropriate.

The great *Gulf Stream*, as it is called, which issues from the Gulf of Mexico, and runs between Florida, Cuba, and the Bahama Isles, and so northwards in a direction parallel to the eastern coast of North America, and of which the channel, in ancient times, is said to have approached still nearer to the coast, occasions great currents precisely at this place, inasmuch as the peninsula of Barnstable offers<sup>110</sup> opposition to the stream, as it comes from the southward.

The

<sup>110</sup> The "great currents" of the Gulf Stream, and the "opposition offered to it" by the peninsular of Cape Cod, or "Barnstable," are altogether matters of

The STRAUMFIÖRÐR of the ancient Northmen is supposed to be *Buzzard's Bay*; and STRAUMEY, *Martha's Vineyard*; although the accounts of the many eggs found there would seem more precisely to correspond to the island which lies off the entrance of Vineyard Sound, and which to this day is called *Egg Island*.

KROSSANES is probably *Gurnet Point*. It must have been somewhat to the northward of this that Karlsefne landed, when he saw the mountain range (*The Blue Hills*), which he considered as forming part of the same range that extends to the region where we recognize the place named HÓP (*i Hope*).

The word HÓP, in Icelandic, may either denote a small recess, or bay, formed by a river from the interior falling into an inlet from the sea, or the land bordering on such a bay. To this Mount Hope's Bay, or MONT HAUP'S BAY, as the

of fancy. For the purpose of obtaining accurate information on the subject, we addressed a note to the Superintendent of the Coast Survey, and received the following reply:—

U. S. COAST SURVEY OFFICE,  
Washington, Sept. 7, 1876.

DEAR SIR,—Your letter of 28th August to the Superintendent of the Coast Survey, requesting certain information regarding the Gulf Stream off Cape Cod in lats.  $41^{\circ}$  to  $42^{\circ}$ , has, in his absence, been referred to this office for reply.

The actual observations of the Coast Survey do not extend further north than lat.  $40^{\circ}$ ; but in the British Admiralty chart the velocity of the Gulf Stream off Cape Cod in lats.  $41^{\circ}$  and  $42^{\circ}$  is given from one to two knots per hour, and its distance (western limit) as about one hundred and eighty miles, it following generally the one hundred fm. curve. I believe that all authorities agree in the fact that its position

and velocity vary with the force and direction of long-continued winds.

Very respectfully,  
EDWARD F. LULL,  
*Hydrographic Inspector, U. S. C. S.*  
MR. EDMUND F. SLAFTER.

The velocity of the Gulf Stream in the Straits of Florida, lat.  $25^{\circ} 05'$ , we know to be only one and seventh-tenths of a mile per hour. *Vide* Letter of Professor Peirce, Supt. U. S. Coast Survey, *Journal Am. Geog. and Stat. Soc.*, Vol. II. p. cix. Its velocity cannot, therefore, be much over one mile per hour off Cape Cod; and, if its western limit is one hundred and eighty miles distant, it is vain to look to the Gulf Stream for any explanation of the currents in the region of Buzzard's Bay. There are undoubtedly currents there, but they clearly arise from other causes.

the Indians term it, corresponds, through which the Taunton River flows, and, by means of the very narrow yet navigable Pocasset River, meets the approaching water of the ocean at its exit at Seaconnet. It was at this Hópe that Leifsbooths were situate; it was above it, and therefore most probably on the beautiful elevation called afterwards by the Indians MONT HAUP, that Thorfinn Karlsefne erected his dwelling-houses.

## CLIMATE AND SOIL.

Concerning the climate of the country and the quality of the soil, and also concerning some of its productions, the ancient writings contain sundry illustrative remarks. The climate was so mild that it appeared the cattle did not require winter fodder; for there came no snow, and the grass was but slightly withered. Warden uses similar expressions respecting this region: "*La température est si douce que la végétation souffre rarement du froid ou de la sécheresse. On l'appelle le paradis de l'Amérique, parce qu'elle l'emporte sur les autres lieux par sa situation, son sol et son climat.*" "An excursion from Taunton to Newport, R.I., down Taunton River and Mount Hope Bay, conducts the traveller among scenery of great beauty and loveliness," says Hitchcock; and when he adds, "that the beautiful appearance of the country, and the interesting historical associations connected with that region, conspire to keep the attention alive, and to gratify the taste," he will find that this last remark is applicable to times much more remote than he thought of, when he gave expression to the above sentiment.

A country of such a nature might well deserve the appellation of "THE GOOD," which was the epithet the ancient Northmen bestowed on it; especially as it yielded productions whereon they set a high value, and of which their colder native land was for the most part destitute.

PRODUCE AND NATURAL HISTORY.

*Vines* grew there spontaneously; a circumstance which Adam of Bremen, a foreign writer of the same (that is of the eleventh) century, mentions that he had learned, not from conjecture, but from authentic accounts furnished by Danes. As his authority on this occasion, he cites the Danish king, Sveyn Estrithson, a nephew of Canute the Great. It is well known that vines still grow in that region in great abundance.

*Spontaneously growing wheat* (*sjálfsánir hvætiakrar*).

At the subsequent arrival of the Europeans, Maize, or Indian corn, as it is called, was found growing here; this the natives reaped without having sowed,<sup>111</sup> and they preserved it in holes in the earth, as it constituted one of their most valuable articles of food. Honeydew<sup>112</sup> was found on the island which lies off it, as is also still the case.

*Mazer* (*maufur*), a species of wood of remarkable beauty, probably a species of the *Acer rubrum*, or *Acer saccharinum*,

<sup>111</sup> The maize of the Indians did not grow *spontaneously*, but the seed was carefully preserved and planted by them annually.

<sup>112</sup> Honey-dew is a fugary, clammy secretion, formerly regarded as being

formed by the leaves of plants in hot weather. It appears to be secreted by *Aphides*, and is sometimes so abundant as to fall from the leaves in drops. — Brande.



*rinum*, which grows here, and which is called "bird's eye" or "curled maple." Wood for building was also obtained here.

*A great number of forest animals of all kinds.* It is understood that the Indians chose this region in preference, for their abode, chiefly on account of the excellent hunting.

At present the forests are for the most part cut down, and the animals have withdrawn to the interior and woodland regions. From the natives the Northmen bought squirrel skins, and all kinds of peltries, which are still to be found in abundance in this district.

*Eider-ducks*, and other *birds*, were found in great numbers on the adjacent islands, as is also at present the case, on which account some of them have the name of Egg-Islands.<sup>113</sup>

Every river was full of *fish*, among which are mentioned excellent *salmon*. On the coast was also caught a great quantity of fish. The Northmen dug ditches along the shore, within the high water-mark, and when the tide receded they found *halibuts* in the ditches. On the coast they also caught *whales*, and among these the *reidr* (*Balæna physalis*). In the modern descriptions of this region, it is stated "that all the rivers are full of fish;" and of the waters in that neighborhood it is said, "Il y a une grande abondance de poissons de presque toutes les espèces." Salmon may be mentioned as one of these. Not long ago, the whale-fishery

<sup>113</sup> The eider-duck is at this time found in great numbers in the region of Cape Cod in the cold season; but its home is farther to the north, where incubation takes place; and, consequently, the eggs here referred to must have been the product of other species.

whale-fishery was, in that very region, an important branch of industry; especially for the inhabitants of the adjacent islands.<sup>114</sup> Very possibly the adjacent Whale Rock has its name from the same circumstances.

#### ASTRONOMICAL EVIDENCE.

Besides the nautical and geographical statements, one of the most ancient writings has preserved an *astronomical* notice, where it is said that the days there were of more equal length than in Iceland or Greenland; that, on the shortest day, the sun rose at half past seven o'clock and set at half past four; which makes the shortest day nine hours. This astronomical observation gives for the place latitude  $41^{\circ} 24' 10''$ . "The latitude of Seaconnet Point, and of the southernmost promontory of the Island of Conan-nicut, is  $41^{\circ} 26'$  north; and that of Point Judith,  $41^{\circ} 23'$ . These three headlands form the entrance boundaries of the modern Mount Hope Bay, which the ancients, according to the analogy of their language, no doubt, called HÓPSVATN." We thus see that this statement corresponds exactly with the other data, and indicates precisely the same region.

#### DISCOVERIES OF MORE SOUTHERN REGIONS.

THE party sent by Thorwald Erikson in the year 1003,  
from

<sup>114</sup> In early times, the whale was frequently found on the shores of this country, sometimes in large shoals, and was hunted partly for its oil, partly for the sake of food, whale-meat *balena*, or *baleine*, being frequently mentioned in ancient accounts as an article of purchase and sale. — *Brande*.

The whale fishery at Nantucket commenced about 1670, and continued a successful occupation not far from ninety years, when whales became scarce, and the business was finally discontinued. In 1726, eighty-six were taken. The greatest number brought in on a single day was eleven.

from Leifsbooths, to explore the southern coasts, employed from four to five months in the expedition; they therefore most likely examined the coasts of Connecticut and New York, probably also those of New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland. The description of this range of coast is accurate.

ARE MARSON'S SOJOURN IN GREAT IRELAND.

IN those times the Esquimaux inhabited more southerly regions than they do at present. This is both evident from the ancient accounts, and seems besides to gain corroboration from ancient skeletons which have been dug up in regions even more southerly than those in question; a circumstance which, however, merits a more accurate examination. In the neighborhood of Vineland, opposite the country inhabited by the Esquimaux, there dwelled, according to their reports, people who wore white dresses, and had poles borne before them, on which were fastened lappets, and who shouted with a loud voice. This country was supposed to be HVÍTRAMANNALAND, as it was called (*the Land of the White Men*), otherwise called IRLAND IT MIKLA (*Great Ireland*), being probably that part of the coast of North America which extends southwards from Chesapeake Bay, including North and South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. Among the Shawanese Indians, who some years ago emigrated from Florida, and are now settled in Ohio, there is preserved a tradition which seems of importance here; viz., that Florida was once inhabited by white people, who  
were

were in possession of iron implements.<sup>115</sup> Judging from the ancient accounts, this must have been an Irish Christian people, who, previous to the year 1000, were settled in this region. The powerful chieftain, ARE MARSON, of Reykianes, in Iceland, was, in the year 903, driven thither by storms, and there received baptism. The first author of this account was his contemporary, Rafn, surnamed the Limerick-trader, he having long resided at Limerick, in Ireland. The illustrious Icelandic sage, Are Frode, the first compiler of the Landnama, who was himself a descendant in the fourth degree from Are Marson, states on this subject that his uncle, Thorkell Gellerfon (whose testimony he on another occasion declares to be worthy of all credit), had been informed by Icelanders, who had their information from Thorfinn Sigurdson, Earl of Orkney, that Are had been recognized in Hvitramannaland, and could not get away from thence, but was there held in high respect. This statement therefore shows that in those times there was an occasional intercourse between the western European countries (the Orkneys and Ireland) and this part of America.

#### VOYAGES OF BIÖRN ASBRANDSON AND GUDLEIF GUDLAUGSON.

It must have been in this same country that Biörn Asbrandson, surnamed BREIDVÍKÍNGAKAPPI, spent the latter part of his life. He had been adopted into the celebrated band

<sup>115</sup> This tradition of the Indians in 1512, under John Ponce de Leon. may have been derived from the visits There is little probability that it originated at an earlier date.

band of Jomsburg warriors under Palnatoke, and took part with them in the battle of Fyrisval in Sweden. His illicit amatory connection with Thurida of Frodo in Iceland, a sister of the powerful Snorre Gode, drew upon him the enmity and persecution of the latter; in consequence of which, he found himself obliged to quit the country for ever; and, in the year 999, he set sail from Hraunhöfn, in Sniofelfnes, with a north-east wind. GUDLEIF GUDLAUGSON, brother of Thorfinn, the ancestor of the celebrated historian, Snorre Sturluson, had made a trading voyage to Dublin; but when he left that place again, with the intention of sailing round Ireland and returning to Iceland, he met with long continuing north-easterly winds, which drove him far to the south-west in the ocean, and at an advanced period of the summer he and his company arrived at last at an extensive country, but they knew not what country it was. On their landing, a crowd of the natives, several hundreds in number, came against them, and laid hands on them, and bound them. They did not know anybody in the crowd, but it seemed to them that their language resembled Irish. The natives now took counsel whether they should kill the strangers, or make slaves of them. While they were deliberating, a large company approached, displaying a banner, close to which rode a man of distinguished appearance, who was far advanced in years, and had gray hair. The matter under deliberation was referred to his decision. He was the afore said Biörn Asbrandson. He caused Gudleif to be brought before him, and, addressing him in the Norse language, he asked him whence he came. On his replying that he was an Icclander, Biörn made many inquiries about his



his acquaintance in Iceland, particularly about his beloved Thurida, of Frodo, and about her son Kiartan, supposed to be his own son, and who at that time was the proprietor of the estate of Frodo. In the mean time, the natives becoming impatient and demanding a decision, Biörn selected twelve of his company as counsellors, and took them aside with him, and some time afterward he went towards Gudleif and his companions, and told them that the natives had left the matter to his decision. He thereupon gave them their liberty, and advised them, although the summer was already far advanced, to depart immediately, because the natives were not to be depended on, and were difficult to deal with; and, moreover, conceived that an infringement on their laws had been committed to their disadvantage. He gave them a gold ring for Thurida, and a sword for Kiartan, and told them to charge his friends and relations not to come over to him, as he was now become old, and might daily expect that old age would get the better of him; that the country was large, having but few harbors, and that strangers must everywhere expect a hostile reception. They accordingly set sail again, and found their way back to Dublin, where they spent the winter; but the next summer they repaired to Iceland and delivered the presents, and all were convinced that it was really Biörn Afbrandson whom they had met with in that country.

It may be considered as certain that intercourse between Vineland and Greenland was maintained for a considerable period after this, although the scanty notices about Greenland contained in the ancient MSS. do not furnish us with any satisfactory information on this head. . . .

After

After having perused the authentic documents themselves, which are now accessible to all, every one will acknowledge the truth of the historical fact, that during the tenth and eleventh centuries the ancient Northmen discovered and visited a great extent of the eastern coasts of North America; and will besides be led to the conviction that, during the centuries immediately following, the intercourse never was entirely discontinued. The main fact is certain and indisputable. On the other hand, there are in these, as in all other ancient writings, certain portions of the narrative which are obscure, and which subsequent disquisitions and new interpretations may serve to clear up. On this account it seems of importance that the original sources of information should be published in the ancient language,<sup>116</sup> so that every one may have it in his power to consult them, and to form his own judgment as to the accuracy of the interpretations given.

<sup>116</sup> The old Icelandic tongue, in which the sagas were written, is now spoken only by a small population in Iceland. *Vide* the Earl of Ellesmere's Introduction to "Guide to Northern Archæology." The late Professor Rafn has placed the students of history under great obligations by printing the Sagas relating to America in the original language, side by side with a Danish and Latin version, in "*Antiquitates Americanæ*," where they will ever hereafter be accessible for study and comparison.





NAMES GIVEN TO THE VARIOUS PORTIONS OF  
THE DAY BY THE ANCIENT NORTHMEN.

---

Hirds risnial . . . . .	4½ A.M.
Midr morgun . . . . .	6 "
Dagmál . . . . .	7½ "
Dagverdarmál . . . . .	9 "
Hádegi . . . . .	10½ "
Hæstr dagr . . . . .	12 "
Undarn . . . . .	1½ P.M.
Eykt dags . . . . .	3 "
Eyktarstadr . . . . .	4½ "
Midraptan . . . . .	6 "
Náttmál . . . . .	7½ "
Náttverdarmál . . . . .	9 "
Háttatimi . . . . .	10½ "
Mid nótt . . . . .	12 "
Otta . . . . .	1½ A.M.
Midotta . . . . .	3 "

Compare the above with the dial. See also *antea*, p. 34.





# COMPLETE DIAL

OF

THE ANCIENT NORTHMEN,

ACCORDING TO THE

PROJECTION AND EXPOSITION

OF

PROFESSOR FINN MAGNUSEN,

VICE PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF NORTHERN ANTIQUARIES.

indicated the character of this work in the Introduction, *antea* pp. 10–12, to which the reader is referred.

M. Adami Gestæ Hammenburgensis Ecclesiæ Pontificum. Edente M. Lappenberg I. U. D. Reipublicæ Hamburgensis Tabulario.

Adam of Bremen wrote as early as the year 1075. In the work above-named occurs a passage, which plainly shows that the voyages to Vineland were matters well understood in his time among the Danes. This passage was written long before the sagas were reduced to writing. His statement indicates that what was known at that time in regard to the voyages to Vineland was still in oral tradition, and is strongly corroborative of the narratives of the sagamen as found in the Icelandic manuscripts. Adam of Bremen's history is included in "Monumenta Germaniæ Historica," edited by George Henry Pertz. Tom. vii. Hannoveræ, 1846. The passage referred to is as follows:—

"Præterea unam adhuc insulam recitavit a multis in eo repertam oceano, quæ dicitur Winland, eo quod ibi vites sponte nascantur, vinum optimum ferentes. Nam et fruges ibi non feminatas habundare, non fabulosa opinione, sed certa comperimus relatione Danorum."

It may be observed that Adam of Bremen reports what he had received from Sveyn Estrithson, king of Denmark. We give the following translation:—

"Moreover, he (the king) stated that an island had been found by many in that ocean, which is called Winland, because vines grow there spontaneously, producing excellent wine. For that fruits abound there, not having been sown,  
we

we are assured not by any vague rumor, but by the trustworthy report brought back by the Danes."

The Heimskringla, or Chronicle of the Kings of Norway. Translated from the Icelandic of Snorro Sturleson, with a Preliminary Dissertation. By Samuel Laing, Esq. London, 1844.

The author of the Heimskringla, Snorro Sturleson, was born in the year 1178, and died in 1241, and his work was consequently written not later than the early part of the thirteenth century. He alludes to the discovery of Vineland, and is the next early writer after Adam of Bremen, who corroborates the testimony of the sagas touching the Icelandic voyages to America. His reference to Vineland is contained in the body of this work. *Antea*, page 44.

Mr. Laing's dissertation is a thorough discussion of the whole subject of Northern literature and history, and is rendered not the less interesting by the frank and bold manner in which the author expresses his opinions on some important questions. It contains a valuable memoir of Snorro Sturleson. The English reader of this translation can hardly fail to gain a better knowledge, in many respects, of the character and mode of life of the Northmen than in the more direct treatment of the subject by the historical writer.

Historia Vinlandiæ Antiquæ, seu Partis Americæ Septentrionalis, ubi Nominis ratio recensetur, Situs terræ ex dierumbrumalium spatio expenditur, soli fertilitas et incolarum barbaries, peregrinorum temporarius incolatus et gesta, Vicinarum terrarum nomina et facies ex Antiquitatibus Islandicis in lucem producta exponuntur. Per Thormodum Torfæum. Rerum Norvegicarum Historiographum Regium. Havniæ: et Typographeo Regiæ Majest. et Univerfit. 1705.







## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL.

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T is not our intention to give under this head a full bibliography on the subject of this volume. The following works, relating directly or indirectly to the manners, customs, history, literature and language of the Scandinavians, and to their voyages to the coast of America, will be useful to the reader who desires to give the subject a careful and extended examination:—

*Antiquitates Americanæ, sive Scriptores Septentrionales Rerum antecolumbianarum in America. Edidit Societas Regia Antiquariorum Septentrionalium. Hafniæ, 1837.*

This imperial quarto contains all the evidence, known to historical scholars, touching the visits of the Northmen to the shores of America. The historical narratives, rehearsing the story of the voyagers, are here given in the ancient Icelandic language. For the first time, these old Scandinavian manuscripts of the fourteenth century appear in print. They are accompanied by a translation into the Latin, and likewise into the Danish language. We have sufficiently indicated

subject as made known by Professor Rafn's Report. If the distinguished writer were now living, and were to restate his views, it is hardly probable that he would change them in any important particulars.

Of the narratives contained in the sagas, he says:—

“These accounts are either founded on truth, or they are wholly false; and those who hold to the latter opinion will, we think, find more difficulty in carrying out their hypothesis, than there is in admitting the substantial truth of the tradition.”

“We are decidedly of opinion that the ancient Icelandic accounts, to which we have called the attention of our readers, have a foundation in historical truth, and that the coast of North America, and very possibly this portion of it, was visited by the Northmen.”

But Mr. Everett did not find satisfactory evidence of the Runic character of the writing on the Dighton rock. His own words will best convey the impression which was made upon his mind by the proofs adduced in favor of their Scandinavian origin:—

“That the rock contains some rude delineations of the figures of men and animals is apparent on the first inspection. The import of the other delineations and characters is more open to doubt. By some persons the characters are regarded as Phœnician. The late Mr. Samuel Harris, of this city, a very learned Orientalist, thought he found the Hebrew word *melek* (king) in those characters, which the editor of the work before us” (Professor Rafn) “regards as numerals signifying cxxxi. Colonel Vallancey considers them to be Scythian, and Messrs. Rafn and Magnussen think

think them indubitably Runic. In this great diversity of judgment, a decision is extremely difficult. The present copies are too unlike each other to command entire confidence; and we are not prepared to say whether, in the present state of the rock, better can be taken." He adds: "We own that we remain wholly unconvinced in reference to its interpretation by the learned and ingenious commentaries of our friends at Copenhagen."

The writing on the Dighton rock has been copied at nine different dates. By Dr. Danforth, in 1680; Dr. Cotton Mather, in 1712; Dr. Greenwood, in 1730; Mr. Stephen Sewall, in 1768; Mr. James Winthrop, in 1788; Dr. Baylies and Mr. Goodwin, in 1790; Mr. Kendall, in 1807; Mr. Job Gardner, in 1812; the Rhode Island Historical Society, in 1830. Copies of all of them are engraved, and appear in Professor Rafn's great work, the "*Antiquitates Americanæ*." If the reader will cast his eye over them, he will observe that the later copies are more distinct than the earlier ones, especially in those features which have been the subject of controversy. This can only be accounted for on the supposition that the later sketches were more skilfully and truthfully done, or else that the primitive cuttings have become gradually deepened by atmospheric and tidal influences, or possibly some ingenious idler may have undertaken, impelled by a generous impulse, to improve what he conceived the Scandinavian sculptor left in an unfinished state.

The Northmen in New England, or America in the Tenth Century. By Joshua Tolman Smith. Boston, 1839.

The author discusses the whole subject after a very careful

ful study of the "*Antiquitates Americanæ*." He is a strenuous and enthusiastic believer in the Scandinavian origin of the inscriptions on the Dighton rock, a theory which has now pretty much faded out. The work is written in the form of a dialogue, which gives it a popular cast, but is not a very satisfactory mode of presenting historical truth, especially if questions of doubt enter into it. Objections to a theory can hardly be stated and answered fairly by a devotee of the theory objected to.

In the main, the work is a faithful and trustworthy report of the facts contained in the "*Antiquitates Americanæ*."

*The Discovery of America by the Northmen in the Tenth Century, with Notices of the Early Settlements of the Irish in the Western Hemisphere.* By North Ludlow Beamish, Fellow of the Royal Society, &c., &c. London, 1841.

The reader will hardly find a better account, in the same space, of Icelandic historical literature, than is contained in the introduction to this work. The author has also given a translation of all the extracts from the sagas which describe the voyages of the Northmen to America. In the second part, he deals with monuments and inscriptions, which in his judgment corroborate the discoveries of the Northmen. He accepts the theory of the Northern antiquaries as to the Scandinavian origin of the writing upon the Dighton rock, now generally disallowed. He gives an interesting account of the monuments in Greenland, which undoubtedly have a Scandinavian origin.

*Select Letters of Christopher Columbus, with other Original Documents relating to his Four Voyages to the New World.* Translated and  
edited

edited by R. H. Major, Esq., of the British Museum. London. Printed for the Hakluyt Society. 1847.

In the introduction, the editor gives the narrative of the discovery of America by the Icelanders, as contained in the sagas, with much particularity and fulness, with interesting and valuable critical observations.

Guide to Northern Archæology. By the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries of Copenhagen. Edited for the use of English readers. By the Right Honorable the Earl of Ellesmere. London, 1848.

Besides a valuable introduction by the author, the volume contains an interesting treatise on the extent and importance of Northern literature, the monuments and antiquities of the North, and a *résumé* of the undertakings of the Society with some account of its Cabinet and Library.

Northern Antiquities ; or, An Historical Account of the Manners, Customs, Religion, and Laws, Maritime Expeditions and Discoveries, Language and Literature of the Ancient Scandinavians. Translated from the French of Paul Henri Mallet by Bishop Percy. London, 1847.

This is not only an excellent treatise on this very wide subject, but it likewise contains a brief but comprehensive narrative of the discovery of America by the Northmen.

Cosmos: A Sketch of a Physical Description of the Universe. By Alexander Von Humboldt. Translated from the German by E. C. Otté. London, 1849.

In treating of the discovery of America, the author refers to the voyages of the Northmen to this continent as a matter of settled history. He does not even offer an apology, or suggest a doubt. The reader will find his views fully stated in Vol. II. pp. 602-608. The vast learning, just discrimination



nation and sound sense of this distinguished scholar, give great weight to his opinions on any subject.

*History of Scandinavia from the Early Times of the Northmen, the Sea-kings and Vikings, to the Present Day.* By Professor Paul C. Sinding. London, 1866.

Twelve pages, from 74 to 86, relate to the voyages to America.

*The History of Greenland.* By David Crantz. London, 1820. Vol. I. pp. 233-237.

The narrative of the discovery of America is evidently taken from Torfæus. It is full and generally correct. There is much in this work which will cast light upon the Northern mode of life.

*The Private Life of the Old Northmen.* By Professor Keyser of the Royal University in Christiana, Norway. Translated by the Rev. M. R. Barnard, B.A. London, 1868.

This little volume gives a detailed account of the manners and customs of the Northmen at the period when their voyagers were visiting the coasts of America. It will be found useful in illustrating more or less the text of the sagas.

*The Pre-Columbian Discovery of America by the Northmen.* Illustrated by translations from the Icelandic Sagas. Edited, with notes and a General Introduction, by B. F. De Costa. Albany, 1868.

This valuable treatise will be read with interest by those who accept the narratives of the sagamen, not only in their general scope, but likewise in their details. It is a special aim of the author to point out and identify the places described

described in the fagas. With this view, he traces the course of the Northmen along the shores of Cape Cod, identifying the places visited by them with great ingenuity, if not with entire satisfaction to his less credulous readers. The General Introduction contains much valuable information.

America not Discovered by Columbus. A Historical Sketch of the Discovery of America by the Northmen in the Tenth Century. By R. B. Anderson, A.M., of the University of Wisconsin. Chicago, 1874.

This is a compilation rather than an original work. Of the old mill at Newport, the author says it was *undoubtedly* built by the Norfemen. Of the inscriptions upon the rock in Taunton River, he adds: "Upon the whole, the Dighton Writing Rock removes *all doubt* concerning the presence of Thorfinn Karlsefne and the Norfemen at Taunton River, in the beginning of the eleventh century." Even the "skeleton in armor," found at Fall River in 1831, captivates the too credulous author.

The Early Kings of Norway. By Thomas Carlyle. New York, 1875.

Something may be learned from this little volume of the spirit of Northern life and society in the tenth and eleventh centuries. The author refers briefly to the discovery of America. "Towards the end," he says, "of this Hakon's reign it was that the discovery of America took place (985). Actual discovery, it appears, by Eric the Red, an Icclander; concerning which there has been abundant investigation and discussion in our time." Again he adds: "It appears to be certain that from the end of the tenth century to the early part of the fourteenth there was a dim knowledge of those

those distant shores extant in the Norse mind, and even some straggling series of visits thither by roving Norsemen; though as only danger, difficulty, and no profit resulted, the visits ceased, and the whole matter sank into oblivion, and, but for the Icelandic talent of writing in the long winter nights, would never have been heard of by posterity at all."

The following works will illustrate the character of Scandinavian life and literature, and may incidentally and remotely throw light upon the text of the sagas.

*A Manual of Scandinavian Mythology, containing a Popular Account of the Two Eddas, and of the Religion of Odin.* By Grenville Pigott. London, 1839.

*The Story of Burnt Njal; or, Life in Iceland at the End of the Tenth Century.* From the Icelandic of the Njal's Saga. By George Webbe Dasent, D.C.L. Edinburgh, 1861.

*Viga Glum's Saga: the Story of Viga-Glum.* Translated from the Icelandic, with notes and an introduction, by the Right Honorable Sir Edmund Head, Bart. K.C.B. London, 1866.

*Icelandic Legends.* Collected by Jón Arnason. Translated by George E. J. Powell and Eiríkur Magnússon. London, 1864.

*Ballad Stories of the Affections.* From the Scandinavian. By Robert Buchanan. London, 1869.

*The Story of Gísli the Outlaw.* From the Icelandic by George Webbe Dasent, D.C.L. Edinburgh, 1866.

*The Story of Grettir the Strong.* Translated from the Icelandic by Eiríkur Magnússon and William Morris. London, 1869.

As the geography, climate, and capabilities of the soil of Iceland have probably changed very little, on the whole, since the tenth century, the descriptions of modern travellers will shed more or less light upon the text of the sagas. The following

following will be found interesting and valuable in that view:—

Iceland; or, The Journal of a Residence in that Island in 1814 and 1815.

By Ebenezer Henderfon. Boston, 1831.

A Visit to Iceland. By John Barrow. London, 1835.

A Journey to Iceland. By Ida Pfeiffer. New York, 1852.

Nordurfarri; or, Rambles in Iceland. By Pliny Miles. New York, 1854.

Letters from High Latitudes. By Lord Dufferin. London, 1857.

The Oxonian in Iceland. By the Rev. Frederick Metcalfe. London, 1861.

An American in Iceland. An Account of its Scenery, People, and History: with a description of its Millennial Celebration in August, 1874, with notes on the Orkney, Shetland, and Faroe Islands, and the Great Eruption of 1875. By Samuel Kneeland, A.M., M.D., Secretary and Professor of Zoölogy and Physiology in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Boston, 1876.

The foregoing works contain so full and ample a delineation of those features of Iceland that are unchanging and characteristic, that the student of the sagas will be greatly aided by their perusal. The last-named volume is the latest on the subject which has appeared. Its style is clear, simple, and graceful. It has enough of learning to be instructive without being obscure or tedious. Its descriptions are vivid, its pictures are sharply and clearly drawn and leave a fixed and permanent impression upon the mind. The views expressed in the chapter on the discovery of America, touching Icelandic remains in this country, will not probably be concurred in by all readers.

We might add many other works to the number already referred to as relating more or less directly to the subject of this volume. The "History of New England," by Dr. Palfrey,

Palfrey, contains a very full statement and recognition of the discoveries of the Northmen, and a convincing refutation of the claim for the Scandinavian origin of the writing on the Dighton rock, and of the old stone mill at Newport. Mr. Bancroft, in the earliest edition of his "History of the United States," treats the alleged Icelandic voyages to this continent as a myth, and, in his last, has not in any degree modified his sweeping statements of distrust. We are not aware that any other distinguished historian has reached the same conclusion. Dr. J. G. Kohl, in his "History of the Discovery of Maine," traces with great minuteness the course of the Icelandic voyagers along the shores of New England. But his views are controverted, especially with reference to the visits of the Northmen to the coasts of Maine, by the Rev. B. F. De Costa, in a volume entitled the "Northmen in Maine."

The narratives of the sagas are in their outlines clear and distinct; and unprejudiced historians and antiquaries, who have no theory to sustain, will not, in our apprehension, differ as to their general interpretation. But, in minor features and lesser local descriptions, they are exceedingly indefinite; and whoever aims to fix upon the exact movements of the Northmen on our coast, and the particular localities which they occupied when here, will doubtless find himself confronted by the champion of some other theory, armed possibly with as many good reasons as he can render for his own.



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